CopWatching

Excessive Force Used In Clean-Up Campaign

Nomy Lamm & Val Taylor

On the evening of may 10th, the two of us - along with about twenty other people - witnessed an incidence of police brutality on the corner of 4th and Jefferson. We'd like to share it, and some additional commentary, in an effort to raise community awareness of police misconduct in Olympia.

The specific events occurred as follows:

A man, who is known to most of the downtown community, was standing on the corner with his hands held in front of him (as he always stands). About ten feet away from him, there were two police officers standing next to a police car with one more officer inside. The officers were talking about a dead rat, about a friend who was pregnant, etc. It wasn't at all obvious that they had anything to do with this man, so one of us (Val) approached him, said hi, and asked what was going on. He had barely opened his mouth when a police officer yelled, "You'll have to step away from him, ma'am!" Val moved about fifteen feet away, told some friends what was going on, and continued to watch.

Soon we saw the policemen pushing the man towards the police car, yelling at him to put his hands behind his back. They threw his upper body onto the hood, with his hands still in front of him. At this point there were about five officers, and a large crowd had gathered around to watch. They yelled again for him to put his hands behind his back, and then sprayed him point-blank in the face (with pepper spray or mace or whatever it is that cops use...). Then they pulled him up off the car, all the time yelling at him to put his hands behind his back. He looked scared, but didn't move his hands.

. . . the crowd was freaking out, yelling at them to stop. It was especially hard since almost all of us knew this man, and knew him to be one of the most polite and harmless people downtown.

By now, the crowd was freaking out, yelling at them to stop. It was especially hard since almost all of us knew this man, and knew him to be one of the most polite and harmless people downtown. Two policemen were holding him, and one kicked the back of his knees so that he fell face first into a sewage grate on the ground, his personal papers, food stamps, and wallet falling out of his pocket and into the street and drain. They kept yelling for him to put his hands behind his back, and sprayed him again. One onlooker yelled, "Maybe he doesn't understand!" But they didn't change their tactics.

After they sprayed him for a third time, the crowd became more and more irate, and one officer turned to us and told us to "move along." We didn't, insisting that we were far enough away, we were standing on public property, and we had a right to watch what was going on in our community. He then threatened us ,"If you don't move along now, I'm going to fog the crowd." He repeated this several times, but we stood our ground, until another policeman, Lt.. Wilson, pulled up and told the other officers to do their job and that he would deal with the crowd.

Since we were distracted at this point by Lt.. Wilson, we didn't see when and how they finally got the man's hands behind his back and got him into the car. One of the witnesses gathered up the man's papers, food stamps, and wallet, intending to give them back to him later. An officers told her that they were evidence and she had to give them to him. When she asked if the man would get them back, he assured her that he would.

About four or five of us stuck around to talk with Lt.. Wilson for about a half hour and give witness statements. He told us that this man had a warrant out for his arrest, and that the officers had followed procedure - that not putting your hands behind your back constitutes "resisting arrest," and in that case police officers are authorized to use additional force. We asked him what the warrant was for, since the officers had treated him as if he was some dangerous criminal. He said he didn't know, called into the station to find out, and then informed us: the warrant was for **sleeping on capitol grounds.** His "crime" was that he was homeless.

He was released from prison two hours later, and when we saw him he had a gash on his face and a black eye. He told us that his papers, food stamps and wallet had not been returned to him - and now, two weeks later, he still hasn't gotten them back. When one of us (Val) hugged him, she noticed that his hair still smelled like pepper spray, and a half hour later her ear, which had just barely touched his hair, turned bright red and began to burn. Just think what it must do to you when sprayed directly in your face from less than an inch away!

We don't give a shit if those cops were following legal procedure - what they did was inhumane and unnecessary. What if he really *didn't* understand? Would it have hurt for the cops to try a different procedure, maybe actually *talk* to him for a while? We'd like to know what legal police procedure is for dealing with people who have mental illnesses, or are deaf, or don't speak English. None of those things are crimes - is this how people are always treated if they simply can't understand? (When we brought this up at a city council meeting, our words were twisted and we were made to look like total fools. Gotta love it.)

There are a couple of coincidences from that night that we'd also like to bring up. We heard that on that same night, at least one other man (also homeless, and mentally ill) was also arrested downtown and taken to jail. We don't know specifics of his case, but we think it's interesting that these two men - two of the easiest people in Olympia to find since they're always in the same place - were arrested on that night. Funny thing that May 10th happened to be the night of the wooden boat fair and the opening of the new fountain downtown. Was this an effort on the part of the city of Olympia to "clean up" Olympia for all the middle class people who'd be downtown that night?

Later on that same night, there was another homeless man who wanted to go to a detox center, but since there

(Continued on Page 14)

A Thumbs Down to *The Olympian*

Mikel Pelly

May 20th marked the 2nd annual End Corporate Dominance Day. Demonstrations targeted reckless irresponsible corporations in at least 10 cities across the U.S., San Francisco, Chicago, Boise and Austin were among some. In Olympia about 30 demonstrators ranging in ages from preschool to seniors picketed the Gannett company's *The Olympian* newspaper. Gannett Corporation, the largest newspaper chain in the U.S. with 92 papers and 15 television stations, was picketed because of its continued use of paper from the MacMillan Bloedel company. Mac/Blo has been persistently logging in the Clayoquot Sound region of Vancouver Island in British Columbia Canada. Logging of old growth rainforests in Clayoquot Sound continues to cause more violations of native peoples treaties and has resulted in massive protests over the past several years.

Gannett also was chosen on Corporate Dominance Day because as the owners of the 'Detroit News' they have been practicing union busting tactics on its striking workforce. Workers of the paper have been out on strike since July 1995 when the paper proposed changes that would be seriously compromising to their power and benefits. Over the past ten months the peaceful strikers have experienced macing and violent attacks by 1200 paramilitary thugs hired by the paper. This strike has drawn the support of union members across the country who believe that the breaking of these unions could be mean the diminish of unions through out the country.

They were presented with a blue ribbon for their role in Gannett's corporate dominance of the medias. . . they were also awarded with a sack of horse manure. . . but refused the manure possibly because they already have enough as one protestor pointed out.

A third reason given by the picketers in Olympia's Gannett protest was they felt that Gannett's papers cover a disproportionate number of sensationalized stories. Their papers tend to 'backpage' stories that truly have any significance on the majority of Americans. Examples given were that Gannett papers fail to cover stories of peoples struggles; for equality, affordable housing, fair representation in government, and rarely cover stories about indigenous peoples fights to over come government repression in the U.S. and other countries. There was an over riding feeling within the group that Gannett was more interested in not hurting the feelings of their corporate sponsors than covering the whole news. This feeling was exemplified with one picketers sign that read, "GANNETT-Lapdog Journalists for the Fortune 500".

Upon first arriving at the Newspaper a small number of the picketers were greeted at *The Olympian* front door by a couple of the papers representatives. The reps were presented with a blue ribbon for their role in Gannett's corporate dominance of the medias. Along with the ribbon they were also awarded with a sack of horse manure. They accepted the ribbon but refused the manure possibly because they already have enough as one protestor pointed out.

Despite the large number of protestors with signs and flyers, a strong presence of Olympia police officers and a chorus of passing cars with horns honking outside their doors *The Olympian* failed to cover this story in its following days paper. ◆

LETTERS

Two Sides on Israel

To the Editor:

The two articles on Israel in the May 1996 issue of *Works In Progress* by Stephen Zunes and by the Jewish Committee on the Middle East seemed to me to be one-sided. Here is Israel trying to make peace with the Palestinians, and they get rocketed from Lebanon, and then the authors of these articles criticize Israel for firing back! That Lebanese civilians were made refugees in the fighting is indeed tragic, but it was the decision of Hezbollah who launched the attack on Northern Israel, and the Lebanese and Syrian governments that allowed them to do it, that put the people of Southern Lebanon in jeopardy. Surely they knew that Israel would retaliate. The killing of the refugees at the U.N. is also tragic, but again, the firing of rockets from near the base is what put the base in jeopardy of being hit when Israeli gunners struck back. Hezbollah must have known this was likely to happen, and they are glad that it did, for it gets much of their unwitting allies in the world including the left to act as their dupes and condemn Israel. Note that neither of the articles printed in *WIP* condemned Hezbollah for firing rockets at Northern Israel and terrorizing its residents. Attacking Jews is not condemned - how original!

Israel has been hit by rocket from Lebanon on and on since 1969. So Israel fights back. Every people have the right to defend themselves. No matter what country you live in, if you get fired upon from another country, you defend yourself. The articles try to make it seem that it is all the fault of Israel because it occupies Southern Lebanon. But they don't tell you how Israel came to occupy Southern Lebanon. Was it because one day in 1978 Israel just decided to invade Lebanon? No, it was because people in Southern Lebanon had been firing rockets at them - first the PLO, and today Hezbollah - so Israel moved to shut them down and create buffer zone. The United Nations calls on Israel to withdraw from Southern Lebanon unconditionally, but what assurances do they give that Hezbollah would not use the territory gained to attack even deeper inside Israel? They don't give any, which is why Israel is reluctant to leave until a serious peace treaty can be negotiated with the Lebanese government and their masters in Damascus.

The Israeli Labor Party has proven that they are willing to make peace with the PLO, and most recently dropped from their party platform the part about never allowing a Palestinian state, because they are probably going to allow it in the West Bank and the Gaza strip. If the PLO makes peace, the Israeli socialists will make peace too. But there are those who don't want peace - the Israeli right-wing, and groups of Islamic religious reactionaries like Hezbollah. The latter started firing rockets with the specific intention of having the Labor Party lose the upcoming election in Israel.

Then there is Assad, the dictator of Syria. The Syrians control Lebanon. They call the shots. They could stop Hezbollah at any time. So why does Assad let Hezbollah fire rockets at Israel? Could it be that he doesn't want peace with Israel? Think about it: he has a lot to lose. When he doesn't have Israel to distract the oppressed Syrian masses, maybe the latter will start thinking about their own oppression, and topple Assad.

I think the American left ought to support Israel when it is trying hard to negotiate a peace with the Palestinians, and not back its enemies who are doing everything they can to derail that peace.

Peace, Don Busky
State Chairperson Socialist Party
of Pennsylvania

Workers and the Minimum Wage

To the editor,

Imagine trying to pay rent, buy groceries and raise a child when you're making $8,840 a year, the federal minimum wage. Randy Tate probably hasn't, he voted four times in the last year and a half not to raise it.

The minimum wage used to guarantee working people a livable income. Not any more; since 1968 inflation has eroded 40% of its value. That year, a person making the minimum wage earned the equivalent of $14,560. That wasn't a lot of money, but you could afford a decent place to live and maybe even support a family. And unlike many critics will tell you, most minimum wage earners are adults, not teenagers.

Clearly, it is time to raise the minimum wage. A person working 40 hours a week should not live in poverty. Not here. Vote against Congressman Tate and vote for the minimum wage.

Beverly Turner

True Socialism

Dear Sir,

Karl Marx must be turning over in his grave to see how all the false socialists have corrupted his teachings: worker-owned factories, cooperatives, economic democracy, government owned industry, etc., etc, on into infinity.

I am referring to the *Works In Progress* article in the May edition by Don Busky and Dave Zink. First it is impossible to have socialism and capitalism together or in a capitalist society. There can be no gradual transfer to socialism. Worker owned factories or stores (Yard Birds) are given to workers because there is no profit in the business. If there is any profit it goes to the lawyers and banker parasites. Then bankruptcy.

The capital class today is not shaking in their boots over any so called socialist party or revolution. They are most likely laughing up their sleeves at a reformist party that will only continue capitalist institutions.

Karl Marx's teachings are the only thing that send a shudder down the spine of the capitalists and have since the beginning of the industrial revolution. If anyone cares to find out what socialism is find out from real socialists who follow Karl Marx, The Socialist Labor Party of America at 111 W. Evelyn Ave. #209 Sunnyvale, CA 94086-6140

Yours, Milton Poulos

Women and the Minimum Wage

To the editor:

Congressman Tate does not have the best interest of women at heart in his opposition to increasing the minimum wage.

The minimum wage, now at $4.35 an hour, has not been raised in five years, and is near its lowest value in 40 years. A majority of people earning the minimum wage (62%) are adult women who deserve wages that allow them and their families to stay above the poverty line. Congress is

(Continued next page)

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Mission Statement: "Our aim is to confront injustice and encourage a participatory democracy based on economic, social, and environmental justice. Works In Progress is dedicated to providing a voice for those most affected by the exclusionary and unfair practices that seek to silence the oppressed."

Anti-Discrimination Clause: We will collectively endeavor to be sensitive and respectful to all those oppressed in this society, and their issues. However, if and when we should make a mistake in this regard, we expect to acknowledge it and to express regret for injury or insult given.

The following statement will become part of the Editorial Policy and will be the governing tool for the Anti-Discrimination Clause: *WIP will make every effort to work with the contributor of material considered by WIP to be offensive in order to reach a mutually agreed upon resolution, but WIP reserves the right as a last resort to edit or not print submitted material.*

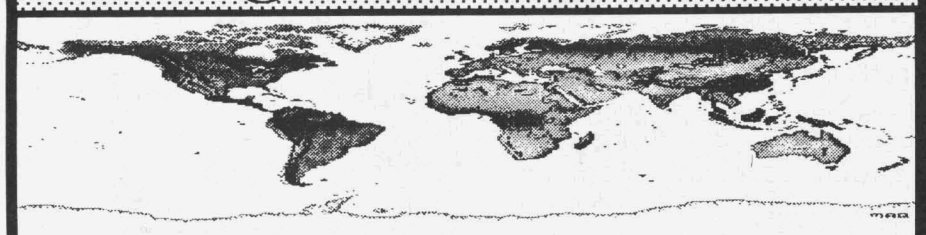
WORKERS IN PROGRESS

Chris Borte, Greg Bye, Dave Campbell, Tom Freeman, Greg Hohnholt, Craig Hymson, Teresa Jennings, Jerome Johnson, Katherine MacRae, Oliver Moffat, Evelyn Montague, Wendy Ortiz, Hali Panneton, Tara Perkins, CJ Russo, Marie Smith, Sylvia Smith, Pat Tassoni, Dave Zink

Works In Progress is a community newspaper sponsored by the Thurston County Rainbow Coalition. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Rainbow Coalition or the Workers In Progress and are solely those of the authors.

Correspondence/articles are always welcome. Articles on disk (text preferred). WIP reserves the right to publish in whole or part all submissions. For editing purposes, please enclose your phone number. Send submissions to Works In Progress, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507.

Calling for WIP WORKERS



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WIP Schedule

WIP article submission deadline is:

Friday, June 21

On that day, there will be a meeting at SPEECH (218 Fourth Ave) at 6 pm. Call 705-2726 for info.

Proofreading Meeting

Tuesday, June 25 at 7 pm
Call 705-2726 for place.

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UPDATES & BRIEFS

(Letters, continued)
currently considering proposals to increase the minimum wage at least 90 cents to $5.15, but congressional leaders along with Congressman Tate have blocked such proposals.

70% of minimum wage workers are adults. Women are primarily affected by the declining value of the minimum wage. Here's why.

- Of the 4 million Americans working for the minimum wage or less, 2.5 million are women;
- Minimum wage work today provides an annual income before taxes of only $8,840 — $3,316 less than the poverty line for a family of three;
- 1/5 of all families relying on a minimum wage for job survival are headed by a single parent.

Increasing the minimum wage 90 cents to $5.15 an hour would:

- directly raise the wages of 12 million Americans, of whom 7 million are women;
- lift 300,000 people, including 100,000 children, out of poverty;
- generate $1800 in additional annual income for women who work to support their families. $1800 for a single mother would buy her and her children seven months of groceries, nine months of utility bills, more than a full year's tuition at a two-year college, or almost four months of basic housing costs.

Raising the minimum wage produces positive work incentives and would help break the cycle of poverty ensuring that women find jobs that pay a living wage.

Congressman Tate would be doing a big favor for women in his district if he would whole heartedly support raising the minimum wage.

Sincerely, Jane Glagett

AARP Notice Response

WIP:

Responding to the notice of an AARP meeting last month, I was amused by the description of the AARP as "an organization devoted to promoting the well-being of mid-life and senior citizens aged 50 or more". The AARP, arguably the most powerful lobby in this country in terms of votes that it can deliver in elections and pressure in can bring to bear on someone in Congress, is a special interest of the worst kind. It promotes class warfare. It pits, for the most part, the haves (AARP) against the have nots. The unreasonableness of this organization and their refusal to compromise is legendary. They, like most lobby groups, have one goal: a disproportionate piece of the pie, and they succeed handsomely.

Anonymous

Whistleblower Response

In response to the Citizen Rights column last month on Whistleblower Protection, it was mentioned that nearly all the state cases reported to the US Department of Labor, get sent back to the Washington State's Department of Labor and Industries for investigation. A more direct route would be to report cases of violations first to L&I.

Jane (Doe)

Cuban Children's Day Toy Drive

Radical Women is launching a Cuban Children's Day Toy Drive to help the Federation of Cuban Women make sure that, despite the U.S. blockade, no child in Cuba goes without a gift on Dia de Los Ninos on July 21.

Dia de Los Ninos, or Day of the Children, has been set aside to honor young people in Cuba for the last 25 years. Traditional festivities include parades, carnivals, and the giving of presents. Because of the U.S. embargo, there would not be enough toys available for each child to receive something without a special campaign.

The drive is happening through June 6. To arrange a pickup of toys or cash donations, call Anne Slater at (206)722–6057 or 722-2453. Contributions may also be mailed or brought to Radical Women's headquarters at 5018 Rainier Ave. S., Seattle, WA 98118. Office hours: Monday-Friday, 10:00am-8:30 pm.

New Political Alternative Progressive Network Formed

A new national effort has been created to bring the various progressive forces together in an effort to end the domination of American politics by the Democratic/Republican Party. The Independent Progressive Politics Network was founded in Atlanta, GA on April 14, 1996 by 100 representatives of 45 organizations in 22 states. This action is a natural step forward evolving from the National Independent Politics Summit which has been working on several fronts for the past four years.

A plan of action was adopted. The "Principles of National Unity and Organization" includes an effort to create a democratic structure that is broadly representative of the major movements and constituencies: labor, women, people of color, farmers, people with disabilities, youth, gay and lesbian people, environmentalists, seniors, tenants, homeless and all others.

Currently, the Green Party, the about to be founded Labor Party and the New Party are organizing on a national level. The new Independent Progressive Politics Network (IPPN) creates a forum for all national and state progressive parties to work together in pursuit of mutual goals: namely returning the power of democracy to the people, all the people.

A National Slate of Independent Progressive Candidates is expected to be comprised of hundreds of local independent candidates from around the country running for Congressional, state and local offices. Each candidate will be supporting a Common Agenda of national demands for 1996. These include (but are not limited to) progressive initiatives to: guarantee a right to a living wage job, fair elections, free health care for all, affordable housing, pollution prevention, rights for oppressed groups of people, and an end to the military/industrial complex control of our country. The common Agenda is a detailed plan for the future of the USA.

A National Peoples Pledge Campaign will gather the names of one million people over the next 18 months who commit their support to the formation of a new progressive party or alliance of parties. Over 60% of the people are tired of being controlled by the Republican/Democrat political shell game and are looking for new political leadership which promotes a government of, by, and for the people. The pledge drive will give the people an opportunity to show their support for the IPPN initiative.

A national steering committee was selected. The committee is made of 27 people elected in Atlanta for a one year term. Of the 27, 16 are women, 15 are people of color, six are young people, two are gay/lesbian and there is equal representation from the West, Mid-West, East and South. Representing the Northwest is Curt Firestone of Seattle. Firestone has been Vice-President and interim Co-President of the Washington State Rainbow Coalition. The Rainbow in Washington is the only democratic, statewide, functioning Rainbow in the USA.

"The Atlanta founding of the IPPN was the most exciting conference in which I have participated for several years," stated Curt Firestone. "We can no longer stand by while the misdirected, greedy corporations of America destroy our democracy, our country, our planet. The corporations use the Republican and Democrat parties to dupe us into believing we have a democracy. We see the truth and we will work together to bring an end to their misdirected control over our lives. IPPN will be instrumental in the emergence of a unified, independent, citizen driven, progressive coalition that will develop into a powerful new political movement."

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Starbucks Moving Slowly on Code Implementation

Starbucks held its annual shareholder meeting at its roasting plant in Kent, WA on February 28, 1996. According to reports from members of the Seattle Justice for Coffee Workers Coalition, Starbucks executives highlighted the company's remarkable growth and expansion into new products and new markets over the past year. In fact, Starbucks' annual report indicates that the company more than doubled its profits in 1995 to over $26 million. Starbucks also cited its code of conduct but did not go into any details of exactly what the company has done to implement the code since it was released last October and did not explain the company's plans for implementation in the next few months. There was virtually no discussion in the main meeting or in smaller meetings afterwards of the specific issues of workers' rights or working conditions.

Starbucks' plan has been to begin implementation of its "Framework for a Code of Conduct" in its 1997 fiscal year, which starts September 30, 1996. However, at this point there is little indication that Starbucks is doing any significant preparatory work that would enable the company to finally begin implementation this fall. US/GLEP certainly believes that Starbucks intends to move forward with the implementation of its code but we are increasingly concerned with the overall pace of implementation, the apparent lack of a plan for implementation, and the apparent absence of efforts seeking concrete improvements in Guatemala before September 30, 1996. US/GLEP is working with other groups in what is currently a low-key effort to encourage Starbucks to move forward on implementation.

U.S./GLEP has also begun to contact other U.S. specialty coffee retailers. Twenty companies have been sent initial letters requesting that they consider building on Starbucks' initiative by adopting their own, even stronger, codes of conduct. A number of national organizations have agreed to write to these companies, including the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, the Latin America Working Group, International Labor Rights Fund, as well as the socially-responsible investment company Franklin Research and Development. Some coffee companies have already indicated interest in exploratory discussions.

Welcome to the Great Boycott!

Networking with people all over the world, we are mounting a long-term publicity campaign to isolate the major criminal poisoners of the planet, so that no one wants to do business with them.

We are boycotting the products and the investment stock of the eight biggest pesticide companies on earth: Dow, Du Pont, Monsanto, Imperial Chemical Industries (England), Rhone Poulenc (France), Ciba-Geigy (Switzerland), Bayer and Hoechst (Germany).

All of these companies are forwarding genetic engineering of our food crops. Purpose? To create crops that will withstand much greater levels of sprayed toxic herbicides. Profits soar. People and soil are poisoned. This is real.

These eight chemical giants are toxifying the planet in so many other ways as well: through their billions of pounds of industrial wastes, adverse-effect pharmaceuticals, chlorine-based products.

This must stop.

Below is a list of products to boycott for the big three companies in the U.S. We are asking our friends in Europe fill in information on the other five chemical giants. This is a global effort. We are in it for the long haul.

Dow.

Styrofoam labeled plastic products; Starane, Spike, Verdict, Trefflan (herbicides); Dursban (insecticide); Nicorette; Norhistamine, Cepacol, Glyoxide, Gaviscon, Cepastat, Citrucel, Delbrox, Os-Cal (over-the-counter preparations); Ziploc bags, Fantastik cleaner, Handi-Wrap, Saran Wrap, Spray 'N Wash, Dow Bathroom Cleaner, Glass Plus Multisurface cleaner, Smart Scrub, Ultra Yes Laundry Detergent, Vivid Bleach, Style and Permasoft hair products.

Du Pont.

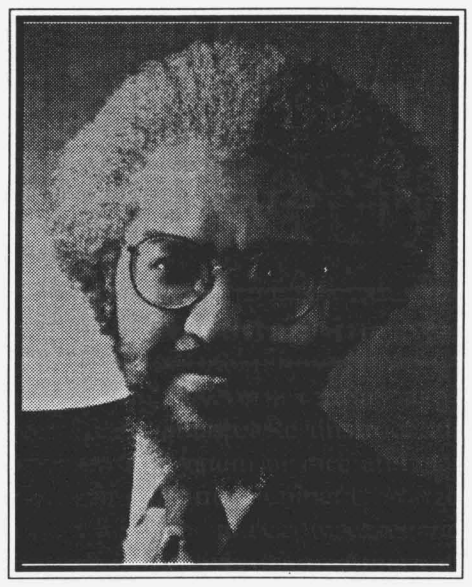
Comforel pillows, comforters and mattress pads; the fibers Lycra,

(Continued page 5)

Along the Color Line

The Death Penalty—

Twenty First Century Lynching



Dr. Manning Marable

Over a century ago, after the demise of Reconstruction, a totalitarian system of race and class control became dominant throughout the South — "Jim Crow segregation." Economically, African-Americans were forced into sharecropping, working on the white man's property for only a fraction of the profits earning from their labors. Politically, black men were denied the right to vote and to run for public office. Socially, black people were not permitted to have access to public accommodations, from hotels to restaurants. Inside the criminal justice system, blacks were assigned to chain gangs, working up to sixteen hours a day. But the key element of oppression, which kept the entire system in place, was lynching.

Between 1880 to 1920, more than five thousand African–Americans were lynched across the South. Lynching was used not to punish people tried and convicted of having committed crimes. Its purpose was to terrorize an entire population, seizing up innocent victims without warning to be tortured, mutilated and killed. Lynching was used as a means of social control, reinforcing the rule of white supremacy.

Today, on the eve of the twenty-first century, the pattern of racial and class inequality still remains within American society. Economically, banks still "redline" communities, denying credit and capital to black consumers and entrepreneurs. The pattern of police harassment and violations of civil rights still exists in major cities. Politically, we are now witnessing a rollback from the civil rights reforms of the sixties, with affirmative action, minority economic set-asides, majority-minority legislative districts all under assault.

But a critical component of this structure of white political and corporate power and privilege is the *death penalty, which functions almost identically to lynching a century ago.*

The overwhelming majority of white Americans favor the death penalty. Recent public opinion polls indicate that African-Americans are nearly divided over the issue. However, the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty based in Washington, D.C., provides some persuasive reasons to oppose this "cruel and unusual" form of punishment.

Advocates of the death penalty argue that executions serve to reduce the rates of violent crime. The fact is that murder rates are actually lower in states that have abolished the death penalty. According to FBI statistics, in 1992, the murder rates in states which have abolished the death penalty averaged 4.9 murders per 100,000 population; states still using the death penalty averaged 9.1 murders per 100,000 population. The death penalty costs far more than life imprisonment. Capital cases always take more time and are far more expensive to the public. The jury selection is longer, and the appeals process is much more complicated. In Texas, for example, six years of the death penalty has cost the state over $180 million. In the decade after Florida reestablished the death penalty, that state had spent an estimated $57 million to execute 18 people.

Throughout the entire history of this country, of the more than 18,000 executions, only 18 involved a white person being punished for killing a black person.

From the vantagepoint of black and Latino people, however, the death penalty must be condemned, if for no other reason, because it is unquestionably racist. Since 1930, over 4000 people have been executed in the US. Of that number, 56 percent have been African-Americans or other racial minorities. Blacks and Latinos comprise together less than one-quarter of the US population, but they represent nearly one-half of prisoners on death row.

The death penalty is used basically to punish those who kill or rape whites only. A famous study of capital cases some years ago showed that the killers of whites were at least 4 times more likely to receive the death penalty than those who killed African-Americans. Since 1972, 84 percent of those who were executed had been convicted of killing whites; in this same period, only one white person was executed for the murder of an African American. Throughout the entire history of this country, of the more than 18,000 executions, only 18 involved a white person being punished for killing a black person. In other words, within the criminal justice system, black people's lives have significantly less value than the lives of white Americans.

Last year, the post-apartheid government of South Africa outlawed capital punishment as a barbaric relic of the past. In our country, which now has over 1.5 million women and men incarcerated in prisons and jails, the criminal justice system is the chief method for warehousing our unemployed, poor and minority populations. We must recognize that the death penalty, the most extreme component of this legal oppression, is nothing less than state-sanctioned murder. By outlawing legal lynching, we contribute toward building a more humane, democratic society.

Dr. Manning Marable is Professor of History and Director of the Institute for Research in African-American Studies at Columbia University, New York City. ◆

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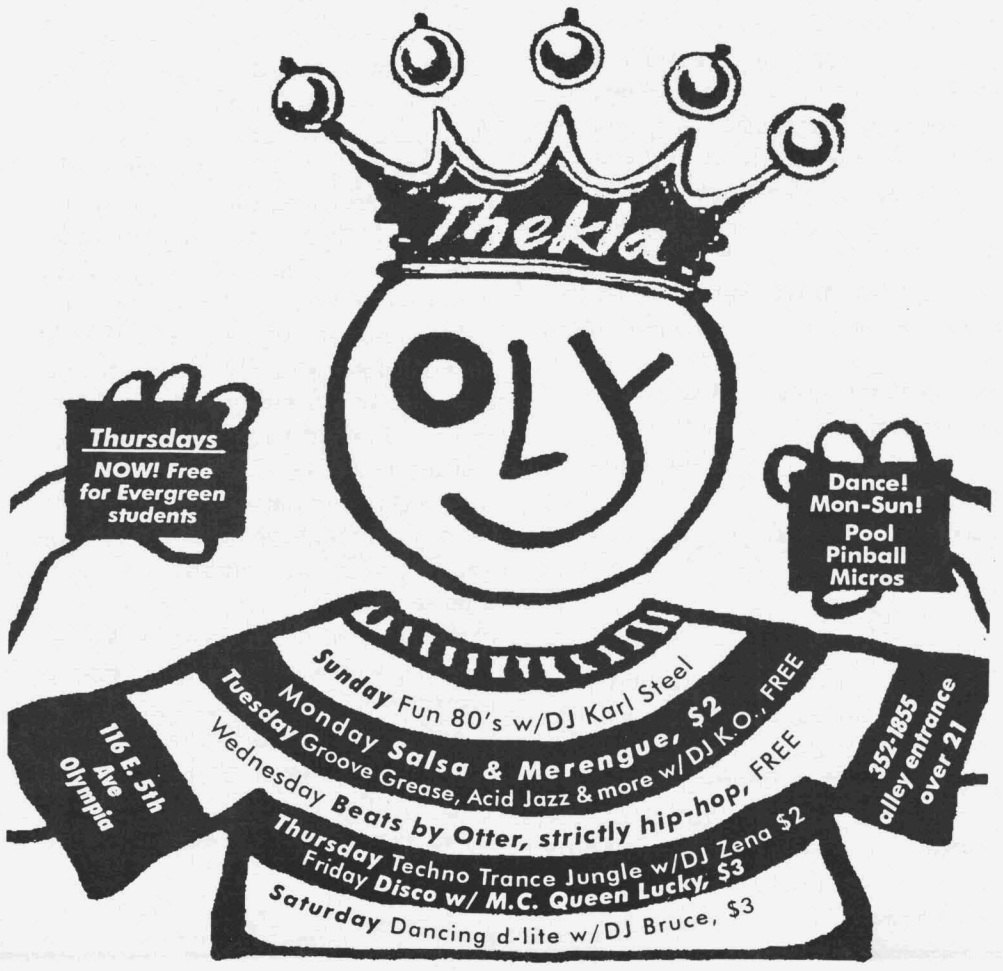

UPDATES & BRIEFS, continued

Dacron, Nomex, Tyvek, Antron, Coran; Tenon; refined petroleum products sold under the brands Conoco, Jet and Seca; the fungicides Benlate, Benomyl and Carbendazim; fishing lines sold under the brand names High Impact, Magnathin, Magnum, Prime Plus, and Stren; Du Pont brand paints, cement and lacquers; Lucite paints.

Monsanto.

NutraSweet, Equal; BGH (aka rBGH, rBST and Posilac); Simplesse (an artificial butter fat), Simple Pleasures Frozen Dairy Desserts, Salad Dressing and Mayonnaise, the artificial fibers Astroturf and Wear Dated Carpets; the home insulation foam sheeting Fome-Cor; garden herbicides Roundup and Dimension; other agricultural chemicals — Lasso, Harness Plus, Far Go, Avauer, Machete, Bronco, Bullet, Crop Star GB, Freedom, Landmaster BW, Micro-Tech Partner, Ram Rod, Accord, Buckle, Fallow Master, Lariat, Rodeo; the Flavr Savr tomato. Be alert for dozens of new Monsanto genetically engineered plants including corn, potatoes and soybeans.

Dow, Du Pont and Monsanto own or share companies with the following pharmaceutical houses, whose drugs can also be boycotted: Marion Merrell Dow, Eli Lilly, Endo Labs, Du Pont Pharma, Du Pont Merck, GD Searle.

Demand that investors and institutions all over the world, such as universities, disinvest in the stock of these eight corporations.

To contact The Great Boycott, call (213) 243-9005 in Los Angeles or write Jon Rappoport at 2633 Lincoln Boulevard, Suite 256, Santa Monica, California, 90405, U.S.A.

Carpenters Group to Form New Union

Nonunion carpenters attending a Trade Improvement Committee meeting agreed to form a new Local Union to represent residential and specialty trades-workers in the South Sound area. The new union will be called the South Sound Residential Trades Union. A petition to be sent to the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America (UBC), signed by carpenters at the meeting, will request that this new Local Union be affiliated and Chartered by the UBC.

The meeting, held at the Olympia Labor Temple April 23 was also attended by a contingent of Union carpenters from Olympia Carpenters Local #1148.

Jack Burtch, Trustee of Carpenters Local #1148 Olympia, spoke for the Union carpenters at the meeting saying that the situation confronting nonunion residential carpenters can only be remedied by organizing every person working in the housing industry and bringing them into this new Union. His union, Local #1148, represents a majority of commercial and heavy construction carpenters in Thurston and Mason County and has the power to negotiate a decent wage and benefit package for the members. "House carpenters deserve the same respect and consideration from employers that commercial carpenters get. If these guys get a union going that can help them get better wages and benefits then I'm for it 100%".

Setting a wage of $15 an hour as the minimum for a Journey-level house carpenter and that a sub-committee begin immediately to recommend wage and price standards for those carpenters who specialize in the different facets of the trade; Proposing to set aside initiation fees and dues for a period of 3 to 6 months while organizers recruit carpenters into the Union; Took a stand against the piece work system currently used by most general contractors and developers; Elected a President — Chuck Gotcher, and Secretary — Derek Martin, to act as temporary officers until official elections can be held at a later date.

It was noted during the meeting that wages and footage prices for residential carpenters are as low as they've been in over 20 years. The trade is being turned into a part time occupation where only those people with no overhead, bills to pay, or mouths to feed, can afford to work. The best carpenters are getting out of the trade and are leaving it to those willing to take low wage construction jobs out of sheer desperation. The carpenters at this meeting hope to turn that trend around by forming this new Union.

Carpenters interested in this new Union can contact the Carpenters Organizing office at 357-4342. Post Office Box 1943 Olympia, Washington 98507-1943 705-8998

Commentary on Compassion

A Greek philosopher once wrote "Compassion is the quality that differentiates us from lower forms of animals." After analyzing this statement and observing how people treat each other, I am not sure that this statement is true. Particularly in our primarily materialistic society.

It seems to me that there is a dearth of compassion among us. There is a definite lack of caring for and sharing with others. The attitude that "I've got mine, you get yours" is a definite problem. There is a gross insensitivity of wealthy and powerful people toward those less fortunate. Occasionally, there are superficial efforts, for example, during the Christmas holidays and on a few other rare occasions, to help those less fortunate among us. But, such efforts have very little impact because there is not follow up.

Anyone who has read the Bible realizes that we should all love each other. It teaches that we should all love each other. It teaches a lesson of compassion. Yet, how many among us really use compassion in our daily contacts with others. Do you?

Too often we equate a person's value with his wealth or his job. Some people worship money as their god. Nothing seems to matter except the acquisition of wealth.

We have a wonderful opportunity to rise above the level of lower animals. But, will we do it? Are we willing to care for and share with others and be truly compassionate human beings? Your conscience, as a human being, will make that decision. Think about it.

Something to Think About

If we are supposed to use moderation in our lives, why do so many people in our society have such an obsession to acquire money and wealth of all kinds — no matter what they have to do to get it?

We say that Russians are atheists because they don't worship god. They worship material things instead of a spiritual being. (This, of course, is an absolute falsehood perpetuated by the true atheists in our own society who have come to worship money as their god.)

A true Christian cannot be a greedy, insensitive person despite what some so-called self-proclaimed Christians say. Act like Christ. How many of us, although we profess to be Christians, are really Christians?

We all know that Christ wanted and still wants us to care for and share with others. We also know that being greedy is being sinful.

Maybe, the most important thing is not that a person is outwardly a Christian — as many of us are outwardly . But that we feel inwardly that we love our fellow man and show it in all of our words and actions.

by George Riffero

Native American Peace and Dignity Run; June 21-July 1

Native peoples are undertaking a spiritual journey of unity. They are running between Native Nations in North and South America to converge in Mexico on October 12. They have crossed Alaska and recently entered British Columbia. They will be with the Swinomish peoples June 23, Tulalip on June 24, Snoqualmie Falls on June 25, Muckleshoot on June 26, Puyallup on June 27, Nisqually on June 28, and Chehalis on June 29th and 30th.

All interested are invited to witness, to run a portion, sponsor or host a runner. For information: Ray Williams or Raul 1-800-820-8105 or (206) 382-4833 ◆

CITIZEN RIGHTS

Antitrust Laws

If any person knows or suspects that competitors, suppliers or even an employer are violating the antitrust laws, that person should alert the antitrust agencies so that they can determine whether to investigate.

There are three major federal antitrust laws: The Sherman Antitrust Act, the Clayton Act and the Federal Trade Commission Act. The Department of Justice also often uses other laws to fight illegal activities, including laws that prohibit false statements to federal agencies, perjury, obstruction of justice, conspiracies to defraud the United States and mail and wire fraud. Each of these crimes carries its own fines and imprisonment terms which may be added to the fines and imprisonment terms for antitrust law violations.

The Sherman Act (1890) outlaws all contracts, combinations, and conspiracies that unreasonably restrain interstate trade. It also makes it a crime to monopolize any part of interstate commerce. Violations are punished as criminal felonies.

The Clayton Act (1914, amended in 1950) prohibits mergers or acquisitions that are likely to lessen competition. It also prohibits certain other business practices that under certain circumstances may harm competition. It is a civil statute and carries no criminal penalties.

The Federal Trade Commission Act prohibits unfair methods of competition in interstate commerce, but carries no criminal penalties.

Tell tale signs of antitrust:

- **Price-fixing and bid-rigging**
- **Evidence that two sellers of similar products have agreed to price their products a certain way, to sell only a certain amount of their product, or to sell only in certain areas or to certain customers**
- **Large price changes involving more than one seller of very similar products of different brands, particularly if the price changes are of equal amount and occur at same time**
- **A seller's statement that "We can't sell to you; according to our agreement, so-and-so is the only firm that can sell to you."**
- **Fewer competitors than normal submit bids on a project**
- **Competitors submit identical bids**
- **The same company repeatedly has been the low bidder who has been awarded contracts for a certain service or in a particular area**
- **Bidders seem to win bids on a fixed rotation**
- **An unusual/unexplainable large dollar difference between the winning bid and all other bids**

You can write or call:

The Antitrust Division
Department of Justice
10th Street and Pennsylvania Ave
Washington DC 20530
(202) 514-3543

Federal Trade Commission
2806 Federal Building
915 Second Ave
Seattle, WA 98174
(206) 220-6350

From the Inside Out

Tort Reform Advocates Misrepresents Prisoner Litigation in PR Campaign

Dan Pens

Editorial Note: Please check out an article titled "Microsoft Out-cells the Competition" in the May issue of Z Magazine. Dan Pens authored this piece concerning the use of prison labor by the big corporations.

Perhaps you have heard or read about "litigation reform" in the corporate-owned media. Much of (what passes for) the debate has to do with tort reform, i.e. making it more difficult for citizens to sue corporations for damages. Who didn't hear about the woman who spilled McDonald's coffee on her lap and then reaped a multi-million dollar damage award in a lawsuit? Those who advocate for "reform" used this example to spearhead their campaign to make it more difficult to sue Corporate America and to limit damage awards in such suits.

The tort reform advocates flooded the airwaves and newspapers with their rhetoric: "The woman was careless. She shouldn't have been holding the coffee in her lap. She spilled it on herself. She got a greedy lawyer and together they bilked McDonalds out of millions. This is the kind of abuse that needs to be stopped!"

I'm sure you probably read or heard about this case. But were you ever provided with a complete accounting of the facts considered by the jury who made the award? I'm operating from memory here, but as I recall, McDonalds had strictly enforced guidelines requiring the coffee to be served at a temperature of 180 degrees, even though they knew that was hot enough to cause serious burn injuries.

..."the salad bar claim" turns out to be a minor aspect of a 27-page complaint alleging major prison deficiencies including overcrowding, lack of proper ventilation, lack of sufficient food, confinement of prisoners with contagious diseases and food contaminated by rodents.

McDonalds had previously been sued - numerous times - by customers who were seriously injured by their 180° coffee. They had also conducted "cost/benefit risk assessment" analyses to determine whether or not they should lower the coffee's temperature. The corporation determined what the financial impact (lost sales) would be from lowering the serving temperature to 160 degrees and weighed that against the amount of damages they might anticipate paying in future court actions if they left it at a dangerous 180 degrees. Internal corporate documents revealed that McDonalds made a conscious decision — knowing that it would cause a certain number of injuries to its customers - that it would be more "cost effective" to allow some of their customers to receive severe burns (and settle the damages out of court) than it would be to lower the temperature of their coffee and thus loose "market share" to the competition.

What McDonalds didn't count on was that one plaintiff would choose not to settle out of court. She wanted McDonalds to be prevented from injuring others like herself in the future. That's why the case went to trial.

Jurors later stated that they awarded millions in damages because they also agreed that McDonalds should not consciously choose to gravely injure a small percentage of its customers merely because they might loose market share if they were to make the product safer.

What, if anything, does this have to do with prisoners? Another, perhaps less publicized, aspect of "litigation reform" has focused on prisoner-initiated lawsuits. You may or may not have heard or read about the dire need to curtail "frivolous litigation" filed in the courts by those pesky prisoners. Let me give you a little background.

In early 1995 the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG) had a conference wherein they developed a blueprint for a campaign to limit prisoner litigation. It was basically a two-prong plan. The first prong consisted of a well-orchestrated and coordinated PR campaign to "educate" the American public about the evils of prisoner litigation. The second prong was the development of model legislation designed to codify the needed "reforms" into law.

The PR campaign was highlighted by packaging "Top Ten" lists of "frivolous inmate lawsuits" which were then spoon-fed to the corporate media. Does this ring a bell now? You probably read one of these "Top Ten" press releases in USA Today or another major media outlet.

Perhaps the poster boy of the campaign was the prisoner who sued because he ordered chunky peanut butter from the prison canteen and they sent him creamy peanut butter instead. Sounds frivolous, doesn't it? But the NAAG press releases were just as deceptive — if not more so — than the tort reform PR about the careless woman who spilled McDonalds coffee on her lap. In the April issue of Prison Legal News we published an article written by Chief Judge Jon 0. Newman, Second Circuit

(Continued next page)

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– Paul Robeson

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(Inside Out, continued)

Court of Appeals. Judge Newman had read one such "Top Ten" article in the New York Times.

"I wondered about the characterization of these suits," writes Judge Newman, "because, though I have seen many prisoner suits that lacked merit, it has not been my experience in 23 years as a federal judge that what the attorneys general described was at all 'typical' of prisoner litigation."

The judge had a researcher provide him with copies of the cases mentioned in the Times article. Here's what he found out:

"In the peanut butter case," the judge wrote, "the prisoner did order two jars of peanut butter from the canteen and one was the wrong kind. He sued because, after the correctional officer quite willingly took back the wrong product and assured him that the item he had ordered would be sent the next day, the authorities transferred the prisoner that night to another prison, and his account remained charged $2.50 for the item that he ordered but never received. Maybe $2.50 doesn't seem like much money, but out of a prisoner's commissary account, it is not a trivial loss, and it was for the loss of these funds that the prisoner sued."

The judge wrote about several other of the supposed "frivolous" prisoner lawsuits and revealed similar deception in the NAAG characterization of them in the corporate press. For instance, another suit was about a prisoner who complained that his prison didn't have a salad bar in the mess hall. Judge Newman revealed that "the salad bar claim turns out to be a minor aspect of a 27-page complaint alleging major prison deficiencies including overcrowding, lack of proper ventilation, lack of sufficient food, confinement of prisoners with contagious diseases and food contaminated by rodents. The inmate's reference to the food was to point out that basic nutritional needs are not being met. The claim mentioned that the salad bar was available to corrections officers and to prisoners in other states. It is hardly a suit about lack of a salad bar."

The NAAG press releases often cite statistics to bolster their claims that prisoner lawsuits need to be curtailed, such as the following: "In 1986 the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts counted 22,000 [civil rights] lawsuits filed by prisoners. In 1992 the number of prisoner [civil rights] lawsuits was approximately 26,800 — a 22 percent increase in just six years!" The NAAG press releases provide no further statistical analysis, implying that none is warranted. Consider, however, the following:

In that same six-year period (1986-1992), the number of prisoners increased 62 percent. In 1986 there was a lawsuit filed by one in every 23 prisoners. In 1992 that rate decreased (by 30 percent) to one in every 33 prisoners.

Another NAAG-propagated myth is that prisoners are more litigious than the rest of Americans. Not true. The National Center for the State Courts recorded 14.8 million civil lawsuits filed by the general public in 1993. That means the public filed one civil lawsuit for every 17 Americans. That is nearly twice the rate at which prisoners litigate.

Every 24-page monthly issue of Prison Legal News is filled with reporting on "non-frivolous" prisoner lawsuits. We lack the space to print them all, and certainly don't have the room to report the frivolous cases. Here is a "Top Ten" list which, unlike the NAAG lists, includes the actual case cites. If you want to read the entire cases, you're welcome to look them up at any law library. I'd like to thank Paul Lefrak who downloaded the list from the Internet and sent it to PLN. He retrieved it from: http://www.wco.com/aerick/ten.htm

This list was compiled by the National Prison Project and the Coalition Against STOP and posted on the Internet as a response to the NAAG "Top Ten" lists.

Several states have already passed legislation that limits prisoners' ability to file lawsuits. Similar legislation was recently passed by the U.S. Congress. Another federal bill was just signed into law which severely limits the ability of death-sentenced prisoners to challenge their innocence in the courts, but that's a topic for another column. Until then, greetings from the gulag.

Dan Pens is co-editor of Prison Legal News. A free sample of PLN is available upon request by writing to: Dan Pens #279308, P.O. Box 888, Monroe, WA 98272- 0888 ◆

Top Ten "Non-frivolous Lawsuits Filed by Prisoners

1 Prison guards routinely sexually assault female prisoners. One officer sexually fondles a prisoner who is receiving medical care in the infirmary, forces her to perform oral sex, then rapes her. Another officer forces a prisoner to perform oral sex while she empties the trash as part of a work detail. Women Prisoners v. District of Columbia, D.C. (1994) (post trial order).

2 Prisoners restrained in handcuffs and shackles have their heads bashed into walls and floors by prison guards, their bodies repeatedly kicked and hit with batons, their teeth knocked out, their jaws fractured, their limbs broken, and their bodies burned with scalding water. Madrid v. Gomez, Cal. (1995) (post trial order).

3 Confined youth are routinely beaten by facility staff, staff trafficking in illegal drugs is rampant, and sexual relations between staff and confined youth is commonplace. D.B. v. Commonwealth, Penn. (1993) (consent decree).

4 Dozens of women, some as young as 16, are forced to have sex with prison guards, maintenance workers, and a prison chaplain. Many become pregnant and are coerced by prison staff to have abortions. Cason v. Seckinger, Ga. (1994) (consent decree).

5 A 17-year-old boy, in jail for failing to pay $73 in traffic fines, is tortured for 14 hours and finally murdered in his cell by other prisoners. Another teenager had been beaten unconscious by the same prisoners several days earlier. Yellen v. Ada County, Idaho (1985).

6 Prison officials ignore warnings by the Commissioner of health and fail to implement basic tuberculosis detection and control procedures. Over 400 prisoners are infected in a single prison. Austin v. Dept. of Corrections, Penn. (1992) (post hearing order).

7 Prison staff engage in sexual relations with female prisoners and allow male inmates to enter prisons to engage in forcible intercourse with women prisoners. Hamilton v. Morial, La. (1995) (consent decree pending court approval).

8 Several suicidal children are transferred to the state mental hospital where they are placed, naked and in paper gowns, in four-point restraints, hands and feet bound to the four corners of their beds, and then forcibly injected with psychotropic drugs as part of "aversive therapy." Robert K. v. Bell, S.C. (1984) (consent decree).

9 A prisoner gives birth on the floor of the jail without medical assistance three hours after informing prison staff that she was in active labor. Other prisoners have deformed or stillborn babies as a result of receiving almost no pregnancy-related medical care. Yeager v. Smith and Harris v. McCarthy, Cal. (1989) (consent decree).

10 Single-person cells house four or five prisoners with mattresses on the floor soaked by overflowing toilets, the drinking water is contaminated with sewage, and prisoners' cells are infested with rats. Carty v. Farrelly, U.S. V.Is. (1994) (consent decree).

"Arouse our dreams
satisfy our hunger
for beauty
take us on journeys
enable us
to participate
in events
present great drama
and music
and address itself
to the ideal
of excellence
not the idea of
acceptability."

– E.B. White

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The Current Middle Age-Corporate Barons and the Nefarious TEAM Act

Teresa Jennings

grunting in gas and air
they sail in a
darkness without self
where no will reaches

Elaine Feinstein

This is going to be brief because I am tired and I bet your tired too. Some conservatives would have us return to the Victorian era. I guess I think that might be okay. Because today's times, sans technological innovation, are positively medieval.

The medieval period was a time in which nation statehood was just beginning to become established and secular viewpoints and challenges were in their infancy. It was also the time when the pattern of commerce which was to lead to Adam Smith's "free trade" logic was just taking a foothold. It was a time when the Barons in England, for example, challenged the authority of the King on every front. They did so based on their own self interest.

The feudal system of this time saw authority and power placed in the church and male property owners; there were extreme differentials in authority and power between rich and poor, men and women, believers in the particular dominant Christian variant (Roman Catholic or the current ascendant Protestant view) and non-believers. None of this is new to you.

Today's corporations act very much as the Barons of England of old—promoting and safeguarding their own self-interest and doing so in the name of "free trade" and so called competitive markets. If markets are so competitive, tell me why do we have so few oil companies, so few timber companies, so few auto manufacturers. Most of these gobbled each other up in market capitalism's business wars of the past that were similar to what is going on now in the banking, communications, airline and hospital industries today. These huge merged corportations, some of which are multi-national, do nothing but operate in their own self-interest in defense of their bottom line and promote the view that they need to be above the constraints of government. In fact, they would have us believe that government is our enemy and that the best way for us to secure freedom for ourselves is to let them operate without constraint or government regulation. What has this got us but low wages, downsized firms, destruction of our environment, reduced educational opportunity and a world view promoting individuals to be the human resources of those in power. Stated simply, if you aren't employed you are nobody and if you are employed, you are a resource to be managed by your boss.

Today's corporations act very much as the Barons of England of old—promoting and safeguarding their own self-interest and doing so in the name of "free trade" and so called competitive markets.

So let us take a moment to go back to some of the wisdom of the medieval period, to Geoffrey Chaucer's Wife of Bath who in the prologue to her tale states:

Who peyntede the leon, tel me who?
By God! If wommen hadde writen stories,
As clerkes han withinne hie oratories,
They wolde han writen of men moore wikkednesse
Than al the marke of Adam may redresse.

The Wife of Bath's Prologue

"Who painted the lion, tell me who?" is in reference to one of Aesop's fables. In the fable a man uses a painting of a man defeating a lion to prove that men are stronger than lions. The lion is unimpressed with the use of the picture as evidence. The painting is a man-made production. If lions could paint they would offer a different view. The Wife goes on to make a similar point about wives: if they had access to textual representation and production, she points out, they would produce a different image of the "other" sex. This interpretation is taken from the *Bloomsbury Guide to English Literature* and is my mind the essential item in the feminist critique. That down through the ages it has been the female voice whether under male or female authorship that has pointed to the problems and injustices of the age. By the way, you do not have to be a woman to be a feminist thinker. But I digress.

Who is painting the lion, today? Take a look at the Corporate advertisement *(below and to the left)* taken from the Internet in support of the treacherous TEAM Act.

These "company unions" are of course a sham and an attempt by Corporate Barons to exert their will over their employees. If they were truly interested in employee empowerment, they would give their employees a real voice and promote and encourage unions in their plants.

Contrast the pro statement, with the one below put out by the Stand UP for America's Working Families by the folks of the AFL-CIO.

So which painting is worthy as evidence. A look at the actual wording of the bill makes it fairly plain. (See sidebar.) But some things are notable: 1) The second and third findings reported by Congress show that employee involvement structures already operate legally under current law. 2) The seventh finding states "employee involvement is currently threatened by interpretation of the prohibition agaist employer-dominated "company unions." One has to ask what were the circumstances of the Kentucky firm's litigation; the facts offered are zero. 3) Despite their effort to make their law palatable by saying something about non-interference with collective bargaining, they have made the amendment so vague and open to interpretation, that it becomes advantageous to use this new wording to threaten and frustrate union organizers and leaders from carrying out their legitimate activities. 4) The current law does not lead to misinterpretation. Yes, this is a battle fought and won in the 1930s and no, it does not need to be battled over again. The lion in me says "a company union is a company union is a company union." If you look at the two messages put out by these two separate organizations, one is certainly more factual than the otherOwell done brothers and sisters of the AFL-CIO.

TEAMWORK for America Initiative

Campaign to protect teams in the American workplace

"Imagine a federal law that tells employees and employers that can't work together in cooperative teams to jointly resolve the issues facing today's work places."

"Few would believe that such a law existed in the 1990s. Yet, it does.

"Even fewer people would believe that as we approach the 21st century, anyone in Congress would block 85 percent of the American work force from participating in employee-employer quality circles, productivity committees, safety committees and similar teams. Yet that's exactly what is happening.

"As ludicrous as it sounds, work place teams are being ruled illegal in large and small companies across the country. The National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), passed in 1935, says that employees in nonunion workplaces cannot share decision-making power with employees" (sic)" (From an editorial by Chris Fuldner, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Jan. 30, 1996)

This could be the dumbest labor law in America! How ridiculous? A Kentucky company was in litigation for three years over its teams. In the end, the ruling said employee involvement is okay, as long as it stops short of giving employees any genuine clout.

It's time to update this outdated law. It's time to replace workplace confrontation with cooperation. *Members of the U.S. Senate need to hear from you.* ◆

Stand Up for Families Questions and Answers

What Is The Teamwork For Employees Act?

The Teamwork for Employees Act is a Republican proposal to amend the National Labor Relations Act to let employers pick and control representatives who are supposed to speak for employees.

How Would The Bill Do That?

Under section 8(a)(2) of the NLRA, it is illegal for an employer to "dominate" an organization in which employees participate to deal with their employer concerning their wages or working conditions. That has been the law for 60 years. The Republicans' bill would change that to permit employers to "establish, assist, and maintain" employee organizations.

What Would This Mean For Union Members?

Passing this bill would give employers a new tool for busting unions. The employer could create a company union and pay all its costs. The employer could then deal with the company union instead of with the real union. The employer could even grant concessions to the company union that the employer would not agree to with the real union. In these ways the employer could very easily undermine support for your union.

Is That The Only Problem With This Bill?

Not at all. The bill would also allow non-union employers to create company unions. That would make it even harder than it is today for workers to form a real union. When organizing becomes more difficult, all workers union and non-union alike suffer since it becomes easier for employers to divide and conquer. Who is behind this effort to weaken the labor laws? The Republicans' bill is being pushed by big business groups, including the National Association of Manufacturers and the Chamber of Commerce. They want to take quick advantage of the Republicans' control of Congress to take from workers the right to choose their own representatives.

Why Are They Doing This?

The Republicans and business interests say they want to promote labor-management cooperation and teamwork. But the current law allow all of that. What the law prohibits is employer control of employee representatives. This bill is really designed to give employers new tools to deny workers a real voice in the work place.

What Should I Do?

Write your Representative Today. Our message: Vote against the TEAM Act. ◆

The examination and exposure of Corporate Barons' messages and the Corporate dominated media should be part of our daily existence. The promotion of alternative sources of information and power structures should become our life's work. Or we will again "sail into darkness" without a will on a ship powered by the corporate world view, as Elaine Feinstein warns, and bear the cost of repeating earlier battles once won. As tired as we all are with the need for constant vigilance, we owe this much to those who have gone before and even more to those who will follow after. To Corporate Management and their Republican sycophants, I offer the current wisdom "Been there—done that." To you dear friend, please write your representatives whenever you can, support local businesses, farmers and those corporations which respect working people, and be a lion and truth teller at all times. Thank you.

Teresa Jennings is a member of the Association of Federal, State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Washington Federation of State Employees, Local 443 and is on the Executive Board of the Thurston-Lewis Central Labor Council. ◆

S enate Bill 295 RS

Teamwork for Employees and Management Act of 1995

To permit labor management cooperative efforts that improve America's economic competitiveness to continue to thrive, and for other purposes.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

FINDINGS- Congress finds that—

(1) the escalating demands of global competition have compelled an increasing number of American employers to make dramatic changes in workplace and employer-employee relationships;

(2) these changes involve an enhanced role for the employee in workplace decisionmaking, often referred to as "employee involvement", which has taken many forms, including self-managed work teams, quality-of-worklife, quality circles, and joint labor-management committees;

(3) employee involvement structures, which operate successfully in both unionized and non-unionized settings, have been established by over 80 percent of the largest employers of the United States and exist in an estimated 30,000 workplaces;

(4) in addition to enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of American businesses, employee involvement structures have had a positive impact on the lives of those employees, better enabling them to reach their potential in their working lives;

(5) recognizing that foreign competitors have successfully utilized employee involvement techniques, Congress has consistently joined business, labor and academic leaders in encouraging and recognizing successful employee involvement structures in the workplace through such incentives as the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award;

(6) employers who have instituted legitimate employee involvement structures have not done so to interfere with the collective bargaining rights guaranteed by the labor laws, as was the case in the 1930s when employers established deceptive sham "company unions" to avoid unionization; and

(7) employee involvement is currently threatened by interpretations of the prohibition against employer-dominated "company unions".

PURPOSES- It is the purpose of this Act to—

(1) protect legitimate employee involvement structures against governmental interference;

(2) preserve existing protections against deceptive, coercive employer practices; and

(3) permit legitimate employee involvement structures where workers may discuss issues involving terms and conditions of employment, to continue to evolve and proliferate.

SEC. 3. AMENDMENT TO SECTION 8(a)(2) OF THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS ACT.

Section 8(a)(2) of the National Labor Relations Act (29 U.S.C. 158(a)(2)) is amended by adding at the end thereof the following: '*Provided further*, That it shall not constitute or be evidence of an unfair labor practice under this paragraph for an employer to establish, assist, maintain or participate in any organization or entity of any kind, in which employees participate to address matters of mutual interest (including issues of quality, productivity and efficiency) and which does not have, claim or seek authority to negotiate or enter into collective bargaining agreements under this Act with the employer or to amend existing collective bargaining agreements between the employer and any labor organization;'.

SEC. 4. CONSTRUCTION CLAUSE LIMITING EFFECT OF ACT.

Nothing in the amendment made by section 3 shall be construed as affecting employee rights and responsibilities under the National Labor Relations Act other than those contained in section 8(a)(2) of such Act.

Calendar No. 389
104th CONGRESS
2d Session

A BILL To permit labor management cooperative efforts that improve America's economic competitiveness to continue to thrive, and for other purposes.

May 1, 1996 Reported without amendment ◆

Who do you believe?

Taken from the Congressional Records, Congressional Representative's Speeches before Congress concerning increasing the minimum wage.

MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE MORE IMPORTANT THAN REPEALING GAS TAX (May 1, 1996)

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, I stand here today requesting the Republican leadership, Newt Gingrich, to schedule the minimum wage bill for the House to vote on. I am not here on behalf of any union, I am here on behalf of a lot of people in my district and all over this Nation that work every day at $4.25 an hour. What do I ask for them? I ask we raise that minimum wage in a 2-year cycle for 90 cents. That means $1,800 a year more for those people.

Now, their answer, the Republicans' answer is no, we are going to cut the gas tax 4.5 cents. We will repeal the part of the gas tax that was in the 1993 deficit reduction package. Well, how much will that give to my people? To most of my people that is $45 per year. They want to give $45 a year to help my people get through the hard times, buy a pair of shoes for the kids.

I say let us give them the minimum wage. Let us give them really something that will benefit them. $1,800 is a lot better than $45 a year.

I ask we raise that minimum wage in a 2-year cycle for 90 cents. That means $1,800 a year more for those people. Now, their answer, the Republicans' answer is no, we are going to cut the gas tax 4.5 cents.... To most of my people that is $45 per year. – *Mr. VOLKMER*

ASSAULT ON WORKING FAMILIES AND GAS TAX CUT ARE SEPARATE ISSUES (May 1, 1996)

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, every American has the right to a livable wage. The Republicans have offered what they say is an alternative to increasing the minimum wage. They want to talk about cutting the gas tax and they claim that this will benefit the working poor.

This is a sham. The 4-cent gas tax is not designated to help working folks; it is calculated to bail out the oil and gas industry. The industry increased gas prices. If the prices are too high, the industry should reduce them.

Rising prices at the gas pump should not be offset with a tax cut that will cost the U.S. Treasury $4 billion this year. Republicans claim that they want to balance the budget, but then they go out and cut programs that the working poor depend on. The Republicans' assault on the working families should not be confused with a gas tax cut. They are separate issues.

We should keep the minimum wage debate clean and we should vote to increase the minimum wage. If a tax cut is necessary, then we should do that also, but they are separate issues.

RAISING MINIMUM WAGE WILL DESTROY SMALL BUSINESS (May 1, 1996)

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I have been very interested over the last several days to listen to Members of the Democratic Party telling us how committed they are to raising the minimum wage, and it is very interesting because one would wonder why, when the President of the United States himself has said this is a bad idea, and when Members of his administration have said this is a terrible way to treat poor people, why the Democrats in the House of Representatives are so insistent upon it.

Now we find out why. It is because they are doing the bidding of the union bosses who are making absolutely certain that they get this kind of debate going, because the union bosses have contract negotiations coming up this fall, and they would like to see the Federal Government raise wages by 20 percent so that they can use that as the base of what they do in their negotiations.

And guess what? Every American will suffer as a result of that because that will set off an inflationary spiral that will be a tax on every American family, but particularly low income families. If my colleagues think that kind of callous disregard of the American family is a good idea, then listen intently to the Democrats, who claim they want to raise the minimum wage.

The fact is in raising the minimum wage what they are doing is undermining small business in the country, and they are undermining the basic income of the American family. It is a shame and they should be called for what they are doing. ◆

Reviving Citizen's Rights to Revoke Corporate Charters

As American As Apple Pie

Patrick Mazza

Criticism of corporations, once the province of the radical left, has spread across the political spectrum this election year. From Pat Buchanan on the right to Ralph Nader on the left, even from centrists Bill Clinton and Bob Dole, have come hard words about corporate downsizing and lack of corporate social responsibility. *The New York Times* ran a major series on the topic , and *Newsweek's* downsizing cover story displayed several major CEOs above a banner shouting "CORPORATE KILLERS."

While the breadth of sentiment might surprise some, a growing movement uncovering a forgotten part of American history is finding skepticism about corporate power to be deeply rooted in this country's origins. It's as American as apple pie. In fact, it was one of the driving forces of the American Revolution/ The Boston Tea Party was a protest against the monopoly power of a global corporation, the East India Company.

"The colonists did not make a revolution over a tax on tea," writes Richard Grossman, co-director of the Program on Corporations, Law and Democracy, and one of the key thinkers in this new movement uncovering the history of corporate law. "Americans fought the Revolutionary War chiefly to create a nation where citizens were the government and ruled corporations."

Some of those corporations were called North Carolina, Massachusetts, New York and Virginia.

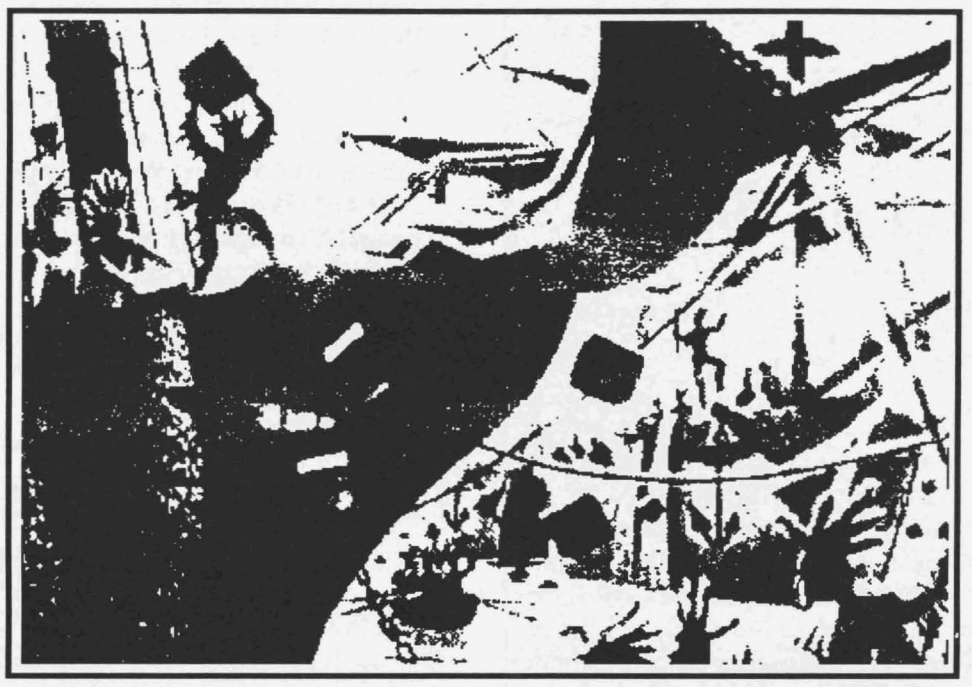
"One of the functions of the revolution was to transform the private stock companies that were the 13 colonies into constitutionalized states, and to get rid of the global corporations like the East India Company and Hudson's Bay Company that were raping and pillaging the North American continent," Grossman notes.

Grossman and Ward Morehouse, his fellow co-director of the Program on Corporations, Law and Democracy, have been traveling the country, offering weekend "Rethinking the Corporations" workshops. They seek to overcome what Morehouse calls the "TINA" syndrome — "There Is No Alternative" — in regard to the dominant role of giant corporations in American life. Calling on an earlier era of American history, they show how the current pattern of relations between the public and institutions of enterprise is far from inevitable.

The experience of the Colonial and Revolutionary eras caused Americans deep caution and skepticism about the institution of the corporation. Some of the earliest corporations, banks and canal companies were only chartered on a temporary bases, and with strict limitations. Charters were often revoked.

"Corporations have always been a presence in this country," Grossman says, "and people have always tried to prevent the concentration of power in the corporate boardrooms."

Grossman has taken up a pamphleteering, a tradition of the Revolutionary Era, to detail how Americans limited corporate power during the century following the Revolution. In "Taking Care of Business: Citizenship and the Charter of Incorporation," he writes, "When we look at the history of our states, we learn that citizens intentionally defined corporations through charters — the certificates of incorporation. In exchange for the charter, a corporation was obligated to obey all laws, to serve the common good, and to cause no harm. Early state legislators wrote charter laws and actual charters to limit corporate authority, and to ensure that when a corporation caused harm, they could revoke its charter."



In the early years, charters constituted an agreement between community and business about the kinds of goods and services produced, profit rates and who could hold ownership. But as the nation's industry grew, the corporations began to gain more power. Slowly, the idea that corporations possessed eternal life began to take root. With the Civil War, and the massive increase in industrial wealth it brought, corporations came to rule the political system.

With the Civil War, and the massive increase in industrial wealth it brought, corporations came to rule the political system.

"Little by little," Grossman writes, "legislators gave corporations limited liability, decreased citizen authority over corporate structure, governance, production and labor and even longer terms for the charters themselves."

A watershed moment came in 1886 when the Supreme Court ruled that corporations possessed the constitutional rights of persons. The impact resounds today. For example, it was the basis of court decisions two decades ago which struck down laws against direct corporate donations to political candidates. Assuming corporations are the equivalent of flesh and blood persons with free speech rights has led to a massive increase in corporate power over the political process.

Nonetheless, the heritage of earlier eras remains on the books. In many states, the right of state government to revoke corporate charters is enshrined in state laws and constitutions. In other words, states still have the power to sentence harmful corporations to death. That is what 25 environmental and human rights organizations are asking New York state to do to Union Carbide for gassing hundreds of thousands in Bhopal, India.

In December, 1995, the groups including Greenpeace USA, Friends of the Earth US, Earth Island Institute, Indigenous Environmental Network and Citizens Clearinghouse on Hazardous Waste, asked New York's attorney general to begin charter revocation proceedings against the corporation. Union Carbide, incorporated in New York, killed 6,000 while health surveys show 204,000 people still suffer the effects of the 1984 pesticide plant accident. A full-page New York Times ad taken out by the group was bannered, "Should Corporations Get Away With Murder?"

The campaign to redefine corporate rights and responsibilities is gaining steam among grassroots activists. At the annual LAWS — Public Interest Environmental Law Conference in March 1996 at the University of Oregon in Eugene, perhaps the biggest buzz wa a series of nine workshops on the topic. Grossman and Morehouse were on hand for the packed sessions.

Grossman notes that three years ago, only one workshop dealt with corporate history. This year, hundreds of attendees were involved in the "corporate disempowerment" workshops.

"What this reflects," Grossman says, "is that issues relating to the rights and powers of the sovereign people and our legal relationship with our institutions of enterprise are now squarely on the agenda. That's a big change from the past several generations."

Grossman, co-author with Richard Kazis on "Fear at Work: Job Blackmail, Labor and the Environment," has been raising the corporate charter issue since 1991. It's part of a "rumbling," as he describes it.

"We're seeing clear signs around the country and in other countries that people are starting to converge around these questions: What is the corporation? Why are people in communities around the country seeming to experience the same loss of power, the same despair? In a lot of places, people have been doing the right things for 10 or 15 years. Even when people win small victories, they're not adding up. If a corporation is thwarted here, it goes another place. I think Pat Buchanan senses this despair and is trying to manipulate and redefine it."

The "Rethinking the Corporation" workshops have been drawing "from across the political spectrum, honest conservatives, libertarians, radical lefties, radical righties, people who are concerned about the loss of power," Grossman says. "Things have picked up in the last six months, outside the Republican presidential primary. It's hard to put a finger on it at this point. There's lots of cross-fertilization going on."

"This is not a left-right issue," Morehouse says. "This is an up-down issue. The problem is that corporations are on the top and working people are on the bottom. But in a democracy it should be the other way round."

Maine and Wisconsin already have groups advancing a "corporate disempowerment" agenda. Around the country, grassroots citizens are researching the history of corporate law in their states, and finding that, as Grossman notes, "People have faced these issues before and reacted similarly. Psychologically, people find this very empowering, that they're not crazy."

Any move to change the relationship of community and corporation will require a vast political movement, perhaps even a third party. At least one mounting third party effort this presidential election year will put the issue in the foreground.

"Ralph Nader certainly has this on his agenda." Morehouse says.

Nader is already on the Green Party ticket in California and Maine. Draft Nader groups are active in 46 states, including Oregon [and Washington], with hopes Nadir's name will appear on all 50 ballots. Last November, Nader told David Barsamian, "We have to deal with the question of corporate power. This means reformulating the charter of the corporation. We have to make sure the corporation doesn't impose on the American people a double standard, where they have privileges and immunities real-life people don't have."

"The strategic implications of the discussions around the country are

(Continued next page)

(Charters, continued)

that people are tired of fighting one toxic chemical at a time, one clear cut at a time, one corporate closure at a time, one corporate buying of an election at a time," Grossman says. "We're saying we the people are not going to allow corporations to run our democracy. And because of the work of previous generations, there are vehicles."

Under the revocation scenario, a harmful corporation would be dissolved and its assets sold. What remains after its victims are compensated would go to shareholders. Grossman favors a system in which small investors and pension funds would hold priority in distribution of assets.

The issue is more than just corporations or corporate charters, though.

"It's really what kind of country do we want to live in, how we are going to use our resources, how we are going to use our labor. Are those our decisions or the decisions of 200 CEOs?" asks Grossman. "There's a crying out for transitions in every industry, whether it's energy, transportation, agriculture." Noting how the energy industry has blocked the move to renewable sources and energy efficiency, and the agribusiness complex is resisting the shift away from chemical-intensive farming, "how do we free up the grip on the political process in order to begin making the transitions in each of these realms?" Grossman believes we can find some efficient and effective organizations that respect the democratic process and that can get the work done.

Among alternative forms of enterprise rooted deep in American tradition are cooperatives and worker-managed enterprises, publicly-owned corporations, and "simply smaller corporations," Grossman notes. "A major part of the problem that faces us today is the huge size of these corporations, which effectively puts them beyond political control."

"There is a parallel to King George," Grossman says. "People thought all who spoke in his name got their authority from God. It took awhile in the North American continent for people to break out of that. But look how powerful the effect was. Even now, 200 years later, in our unconscious, our culture, our roots, the idea of a king, of a monarchy, is anathema.

"Today corporations are playing the function of a king. But when people begin to name it that, then the idea that this is irreversible will become pretty apparent. It's imperative that we distinguish between doing business and the corporation, between commerce and the corporation. There are many alternatives, as indeed already exist. The particular pattern is only going to emerge from an extended democratic conversation."

Reprinted with permission from the May issue of the Portland Alliance. Patrick Mazza also edits Cascadia Planey, *a bioregional webzine at www.thews.com. He is a member of the* Portland Alliance *ediitor board."Taking Care of Business: Citizenship and the Charter of Incorporation," is available from Charter Ink/CSPP, PO Box 806, Cambridge, MA 02140 for $4, plus 55 cents postage of a standard business letter envelope. The Program on Corporations, Law and Democracy is at 211-1/2 Bradford St., Provincetown, MA 01657, phone/fax (508) 487-3151; cipany@igc.apc.org.* ◆

For Environmental Justice

Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Waste

Lois Gibbs

Picture for a moment a room full of decision makers - power brokers - sitting on stage above and in front of an auditorium filled with community families. These "power" people hold the future of this community in their hands. Imagine for a moment that you can hear these "power people" mumbling to each other. You can see them passing notes about the "hysterical, emotional and radical woman" providing testimony on how her child's life was stolen by environmental poisons before the baby's first birthday. She explains how she wants to stop the poisoning of innocent people, innocent children.

The young mother concludes her testimony by saying that on her child's headstone is inscribed "A Precious Moment." "How many more 'Precious Moments' will we lose before significant action is taken?" she asked.

This is a true story. And, this same scenario is repeating itself all across the country with mothers and fathers speaking out to protect their families, their communities. their plights, our plight is not hopeless. If we work together, we can prevent tragic situations like this from affecting our children and grandchildren.

What will it take to put an end to the poisoning and the stealing of our precious moments? Thousands of monumental moments.

What will it take to put an end to the poisoning and the stealing of our precious moments? Thousands of Monumental Moments. But for these moments to occur we need you support, you hard work and for *you* to take action. You won't be acting alone. People all across the country are getting involved and taking action. And, the American people are ready for change. The evidence is mounting.

Today, for instance, people are talking about a Monumental Moment in the public's understanding a tolerance of corporate influence and power. Recently, *Business Week* published a survey that confirmed the American people are on our side. The Harris Poll showed that 95% of the people surveyed said some profits should sometimes be sacrificed for the public good. and, the poll showed that 71% of the people interviewed believed that Business has gained too much power over too many aspects of American life.

Our job is to assist the American people in their efforts to take back some of the power presently held by corporations. Grassroots leaders have said over and over that we are not about destroying our economic base, we are about a balance - secure safe jobs that provide a livable wage and a safe environment that doesn't poison people or destroy wildlife.

Less than 40% of the eligible electorate voted in the November 1994 elections. Membership in civic organizations, from bowling leagues to the Junior League, has declined. However, this decline in democratic civic involvement has not meant a decrease in concern for the environment. In 19984, 23% of polled Americans described themselves as active environmentalists and 56% viewed themselves as sympathetic but not active. Even when the issue is defined in monetary terms, The National Opinion Research Center's 1994 poll showed that 59% of Americans believe that we are spending too little on the environment. Less that 10% thought we were spending too much.

Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Waste is working to stop the poisoning of people and reduce the adverse health consequences and cancer rates.

CCHW's network of grassroots groups is made up of individuals in that 23% whose activism emerged out of the need to defend their families and their homes from an environmental threat. The challenge is to build a Monumental Movement by engaging members of the 56% of the American people who describe themselves as sympathetic but not active. Each time a new person takes a step, it will create a Monumental Moment in their life and our work.

Another Monumental Moment just occurred. In March, close to 600 leaders from across the country joined forces in Louisiana to protect their families from dioxin poisoning. The Third Citizen's Conference on Dioxin was a significant step forward for our movement. Nine dioxin-source working groups were created and leaders worked hard to define strategies to stop dioxin contamination from these sources.

Each of these working groups are identifying ways to coordinate their activities nationwide and build a powerful force to stop dioxin exposures from paper mills, incinerators, dumpsites, food contamination and more.

Many Monumental Moments also happened as CCHW traveled from Washington to Maine to Florida on our book and organizing tours. These moments took place around CCHW's book *Dying From Dioxin* and due to the tremendous efforts of local and regional grassroots groups. Organizations which have never come together in the past joined forces throughout the tour to explore how they could work together to stop dioxin exposures.

Why? The health problems associated with dioxin and other toxins are increasing every day.

- In the five year period from 1987 to 1991, cancer increased 19% in men and 12% in women as compared to the number of cancers in men and women between 1975 to 1979.
- Even more disturbing: between the same two periods, the cancer rate in children increased by 13% for boys and by 10% for girls.
- Sperm production in men has decreased by 50% in the last 50 years.
- From 1965 to 199, there has been a 250% increase in hysterectomies for women between the ages of 15 and 24 with endometriosis.

As environmentally-linked health problems are increasing, environmental protection is decreasing. State and federal environmental protection laws are being weakened and funds for the enforcement of environmental protection regulations are being cut more than other government budget items.

CCHW wants to build a Monumental Movement in this country. A movement that focuses on people's rights to a safe place to live, work and play over corporations rights to make huge profits at the expense of the environment and public's health. It is the only way to avoid our children and their children from telling a story about how they inscribed the headstone of someone they loved with, "a Precious Moment." ◆

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« OFF THE « DEAF Deconstructing DC Disinformation

Minimum Wage Ruckus Illuminates Where Conservatives' Bread is Buttered

Greg Hohnholt

Meet Joe. He's a guy that relieves me on my shift; a small business owner who is, for the most part, a personable, straight-shooting, hard-working family man who believes in the American Dream. Sometimes we talk for awhile before I head home, and lately he's been hot about the minimum wage issue.

"I have one worker who I pay about six bucks an hour, and that ends up being about double that when I get around to paying all the insurance and taxes. How can I expand my business and create more jobs and opportunity for others with all the regulations and bullshit I have to put up with the city? Raising the minimum wage is just going to make my situation worse—why don't they just lower taxes and let these people keep more of what they earn?"

Joe (not his real name, by the way) goes on to explain how he used to be quite liberal, but is becoming more conservative as he has gotten older (and as his business has grown over the past year). He now listens to Rush Limbaugh occasionally and thinks he makes a "lot of good points". Big government is the disease, and "lower taxes, less government" is the prescription.

Whose to blame?

I'm not completely unsympathetic to Joe's complaints. If I were in his position, I'd probably be frustrated too. What sets my blood a-boilin' is that when these folks start looking for someone to point a finger at, it's invariably those groups that the Republicans have set their crosshairs on: welfare recipients (single moms especially), the working poor, and in the case of the minimum wage issue, women (the biggest demographic of the scut wage workforce). In other words, those with no political power.

If Joe would only take a casual glance at where the Republicans' campaign money has been coming from, he might look toward an explosively expansive Wall St. rather than faltering Main St. as his true nemesis.

By establishing a climate of rapaciousness, downsizing, outlandish CEO salary hikes, and total disregard for anything but increasing returns to shareholders, the new breed of corporate capitalists are gentrifying

and dividing those of us who do not count the "bottom line" as the sole indicator of a life well-lived. They have successfully discarded the old social contract that rewarded workers when company profits went up, instead treating their human resources as an expendable commodity to be canned when stock prices need to be bumped up. With unions almost obliterated in the '80's, and the threat of socialism dead, the last obstacle in the way of utter corporate hegemony is so-called "big government", which these white collar terrorists are now engaged in removing with the help of the "revolutionaries" of the 104th Congress (including our own Linda Smith).

The minimum wage debate illustrates the mendacity of their anti-worker propaganda campaign, funneled primarily through conservative think tanks like the Cato Institute and the Heritage Foundation. The Republican "revolutionaries" are simply repaying favors to their corporate sugar daddies, who poured hundreds of thousands of dollars into GOP political action committees in the '94 election.

The numbers don't lie

For corporate CEOs, the last few years have been a feeding frenzy. Since 1974, the average CEO's salary has risen *300%*, while the average worker's pay fell 13% (in '95 alone, the salary increase for CEOs was 15%, according to industry analyst Graef Crystal). Put another way, CEOs were making 35 times as much as their employees in 1974; now they are making almost 185 times as much. Not surprisingly, real wages are the lowest they've been in forty years while our GDP is booming. In 1995, the Dow Jones average rose over 30% while the Gross National Product (GNP) has been rising four years in a row. Worker productivity is up, inflation is down, the stock market is consistently breaking records, and wages are falling at a 2.3% per year rate. By the end of the century, real wages will be below their 1950 rate if this trend continues.

Worker productivity is up, inflation is down, the stock market is consistently breaking records, and wages are falling at a 2.3% per year rate. By the end of the century, real wages will be below their 1950 rate if this trend continues.

The obvious conclusion to draw is that this new capital gains wealth is getting sucked upwards rather than redistributed. Over 40% of America's wealth is now in the hands of 1% of its population, while the richest 20% hold 85% of the market purse strings. Meanwhile, 11 million Americans, with four in ten of those the sole wage earners in their families, are making under $5.15 an hour, or about $8,600 a year. Despite these economically disastrous income disparities, the Republicans, under the leadership of rabid market fundamentalist Dick Armey, are blocking legislation to give these hard working Americans a raise. (In fairness, I should mention that some 20 or so Republicans are supporting a minimum wage increase.)

Armey's reasoning? He feigns compassion when he babbles about lost jobs, but a modest increase in the minimum wage has proven to have a negligible effect on job loss in 1990 and '91 when it was last raised. Clinton's proposed increase to $5.15 *is* indeed modest when you consider that it would have to go up another 75 cents ($5.90) just to scrape the poverty line level of $12,267 for a family of three. Historically, minimum wage full time workers earned *above* this level in real dollars in 1967 through 1979, why should 1996 be any different?

Lower taxes?

Now what about Joe's earlier argument, that taxes should be lowered instead of raising wages. This option won't substantially increase net pay because the working poor's earnings are too low for a tax cut to have an effect equal to that of raising the minimum. The real beneficiaries of a tax cut would be folks like Joe, who are getting soaked not because of welfare, but because the same corporate pirates that are making a killing in the market are receiving huge tax subsidies from their Republican pals. In fact, taxes on the top 1% have been cut so much that they paid out $83 billion less in 1992 than they would have at 1977 rates. Guess who picks up the slack? Yep, guys like Joe.

Despite this fact, the GOP (and Linda Smith) wants to give these greedy bastards even more of a break by cutting the capital gains tax. On the democratic side, Robert Reich, the secretary of labor, is even talking about more corporate welfare to slow down their family-destroying downsizing. It boggles the imagination!

Cui bono?

So who benefits from keeping the minimum wage at a sub-minimum level? Restaurant owners and Ronald McDonald, apparently; certainly not the economy. Thirteen states have already raised it, and their economies have not suffered unduly. I'm proud to report that my old home state of New Jersey has the highest minimum ($5.05), and they've enjoyed a job *increase*. Obviously, workers won't benefit, except in the warped world of "Big Dick" Armey.

Who *does* benefit? Women and rural workers mostly. 3.7 million Americans directly, and another 10 million from the "ripple" effect. If Republicans really want to support family values and the work ethic, it's time to put up or shut up. Cut the crap, Dick, and let the House vote on a minimum wage.

And as for all the "Joes" out there, it's "big money" not "big government." Welcome to class warfare. If you think the Republicans (or the Democrats for that matter) are going to help you, follow the money trail from Wall St. to D.C. It's a yellow brick road paved with the labor of the working poor and corporate welfare. ◆

Dole's Folly

Jerome Johnson

Eliza called me at work the other day. "Honey," she said excitedly, "you ain't gonna believe this. Bob Dole just quit the Senate."

"No way," I said. "Are you sure he didn't just resign as majority leader?"

Her voice was firm. "Way. He done quit. It's on CNN right now."

Well, well, well. I didn't know Bob Dole is a gambling man, but this sure looks like an all-or-nothing shot. I guess Dole figures that being unemployed will enable him to campaign full time, something Slick Willie will be unable to do. Maybe he thinks that his advisers are right, he should distance himself from Congress, which pundits say us people consider to be part of The Problem. He's 25% behind in the almighty polls, so I reckon Something Must Be Done, but this was a bad mistake.

One of the oldest rules of American politics is, "Thou shalt not forsake thy power base." In resigning from the Senate, Dole did just that. The summer recess isn't far off, and closing the Senate session before resigning would have burnished Dole's image as a doer, a finisher. He should have waited a few weeks; the Senate floor was his counterweight to the rose Garden, and every day counts.

"Dole knows he's had it," said Sean, an old friend and colleague. "He's burning bridges. He knows that he's going to lose the election, and he can't go back to the Senate afterward. As long as Clinton keeps holding the center he'll be perceived as on the Right, and besides, everyone knows that Dole doesn't really stand for anything."

"Dole too old-timey," Eliza said, slicing her steak. "He still back there, a long long time ago in a galaxy far, far away, like the '50s. This is the '90s."

If Dole hopes that resigning now will somehow disassociate him from The Problem, I think he'll be disappointed. He wants us to vote for him because he has " the experience." Where did he get his experience? In Congress, the Establishment, The Problem, and he was there when Slick Willie was a lad in grade school.

Citizen Dole has to do more than hang up his ties if he's going to win this election (God forbid). This is indeed the '90s, and if Dole is to win, he must focus on the people instead of the American Century. (Friends, don't worry – Dole never reads this column.)

I still think it's too close to call. ◆

FMLN hosts Sao Paulo Forum in San Salvador (El Salvador), July 25-30, 1996

Ron Cerro

In 1990, Sao Paulo -- Brasil, a group of political parties from Latin America and the Caribbean initiated the first of a series of discussions. Inspired by the ideals of democracy, revolution and socialism. The goal was to formulate a new way of political thinking. By examining the problems of Latin America and Caribbean countries in the light of their history, the group worked towards viable proposals to fulfill the aspirations of their people. The Foro de Sao Paulo was formed, and a growing assembly of political groups have met yearly ever since. Some of this year's participants: Latin American and Caribbean progressive political parties and organizations; currently 112 participants including: the Workers Party (PT) of Brasil, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) of El Salvador, the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD) of Mexico, the Sandinista Front of Nicaragua (FSLN), the Communist Party of Cuba, the Lavalas Movement of Haiti. Music will be performed by Milton Nascimiento (Brasil) and Silvio Rodriguez (Cuba). Invited guests include Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Claribel Alegria, and Eduardo Galeano.

The Foro de Sao Paulo is not just a yearly meeting. It is an organization of many political movements and parties of the left in Latin America and the Caribbean. Through the Foro, political groups can discuss ideas, exchange experiences and understand jointly the situation facing their countries. Policies can be formulated to address the crisis facing the region. The Foro has agreed to a number of statements as the basis of their beliefs of the way forward.

1. Fundamental beliefs

a) Latin America and the Caribbean is a region with a long, complex and interconnected history. We face a crisis originating from similar causes. The solution to our problems lies with a common approach leading to a common destiny.

b) The international nature of the new world order means we too must form integrated democracies forged with solid political, social and economic alliances between people, parties and governments in Latin America and the Caribbean.

c) Our parties and political movements throughout the continent represent the aspirations of large sectors of society. Together we have enormous potential for change.

d) The deepest sense of democracy is respect for the will of the majority. True and free elections must be based on clean and trusted electoral systems that ensure the basic human right to vote.

e) Government economic policies must not be pursued that continue to be for the benefit of international financial institutions against the will of the people expressed in the ballot box.

f) The neoliberal model has generated more poverty, destroyed the national production sectors and devastated the environment by enriching small groups of financial elite and their commercial allies. Neoliberalism works against the existing economy, and the development of the country. It is a cultural, political and ideological offensive, dismantling the welfare state and resurrecting the fascist tendencies within our society: persecution of immigrants and increasing marginalization of the poor, women and people of color.

Foro de Sao Paulo seeks an answer to the challenges of democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean--not from the perspective of a centralist international alliance of the left, but from a perspective of deep debate and recognition of our own realities.

Invited Guests

International representatives, specialists and personalities are invited to work with the Foro and attend meetings. They do not have the right to a platform to speak or to vote. Observers: representatives from many different organizations, governmental and non-governmental are encouraged to attend and observe the meetings. Requests need to be approved for all observers wishing to attend. Although they do not have the right to speak or vote at the formal meetings, informally there are many opportunities to communicate with delegates.

These yearly gatherings provide an important forum for groups to come together and share ideas and problems in a spirit of mutual solidarity. However, the Foro tries to convert words into action by formulating practical resolutions that can be used to forward the causes of the left.

Government economic policies must not be pursued that continue to be for the benefit of international financial institutions against the will of the people expressed in the ballot box.

Why is the Sao Paulo Forum important for Latin America and the US?

- Poverty is worsening as the current economic policies are not addressing the needs of the majority of people.
- Government human rights abuses continue throughout the Americas.
- Immigration. The US is imposing more restrictive immigration policies while fostering economic policies that are worsening living conditions throughout the hemisphere.
- Governments are spending less money on education, health care and social services as they privatize services and cut budgets and social programs.
- Corporations are closing factories in the United States and moving to maquiladora zones in Mexico, the Caribbean and Central America, causing job loss in the US and creating jobs with substandard wages.

Some issues areas to be explored in workshops: Needs of young people, Immigration, Economic alternatives, Gender issues--Womens rights, Culture.

CISPES (Committee in Solidarity with the people of El Salvador) is raising funds to assist in the hosting of the Foro and educational activities in the United States about the Forum.

For more information about the Forum, please contact the San Francisco Working Group at (415) 648-8222. c/o CISPES, 3382 Twenty Sixth St., San Francisco, CA 94110. --or-- Seattle CISPES, (206)325-5494 or call 866-6000 ext 6513 in Olympia. ◆

CISPES Chapter for Olympia

What is CISPES? Some of you may have noticed the banner hanging from the TESC clock tower? CISPES-(Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador) is a 15 year-old national organization rooted in working peoples solidarity in El Salvador and the US We fight against US efforts of economic and cultural domination in Latin America, whether by military invasion, covert action, or economic blackmail. We are actively helping build an alternative: peoples power, with participatory democracy, human rights, and economic justice. The International workers day banner drop was a coordinated national effort to bring the plight of working people into the public consciousness.

What We Do:

The solidarity movement is an integral part of El Salvador's struggle for democracy and economic justice. CISPES carries out a wide range of activities, ranging from community organizing and educational forums to protests and fundraising campaigns. Some activities include:

Grassroots Outreach:

house meetings, schools presentations, sponsoring of tours to US cities by leaders of El Salvador s movement for democracy. In April 1994, more than 200 activists participated in delegations to observe the Salvadoran elections, helping to detect and expose cases of fraud and exclusion. We organize regular delegations to El Salvador where activists have an opportunity to meet with organizers and directly participate in efforts to create a new El Salvador. *(See Sao Paulo Forum)

Humanitarian AID:

CISPES raises funds to directly support the people of El Salvador through community projects. Projects include funding for rebuilding communities destroyed by US-backed civil war, training of organizers and organizing projects of the FMLM (former guerrilla movement which is now a political party that holds seats on El Salvador s Legislative Assembly and governs 12 municipalities). As mandated by CISPES national convention in 1993, at least 50% of all our material aid is designated for women's organizing projects.

U.S. neoliberal policies are battering the working poor, people of color and virtually all marginalized populations and continue to make life more difficult for the people of Central and South America.

Congressional Pressure:

CISPES worked for 14 years to end US military assistance and intervention. Now that the war is over, we are challenging the trade policies of NAFTA and lending policies of international institutions (IMF, Word Bank); lobbying Congressional offices, protests, call-in days, etc.

Human Rights:

Assassinations, tortures and disappearances of government critics have not been occurring to the degree that they did during the war, but right-wing death squads are still in operation. They are now called the National Civilian Police (created through 1992 Peace Accords to replace the old repressive forces). Although on a much small scale, people are still shot, disappeared, censored and sent into exile.

El Salvador is still a vital strategic area for U.S. imperialism and domination in Latin America. U.S. neoliberal policies are battering the working poor, people of color and virtually all marginalized populations and continue to make life more difficult for the people of Central and South America. We support the FMLN (Farabundo Marti Liberacion Nacional) and the democratic revolutionary social movement in combating neoliberal policies as we build an alternative for working people in the

(Continued next page)

(Oly CISPES, continued)

U.S. and in El Salvador.

Olympia Chapter

There was a CISPES chapter on campus in the 80s. In 1986, 830 students signed in support of a proposal to establish a sister-college relationship between TESC and The University of El Salvador. What happened? The answer is still being sought. A sister-college relationship could be a strong link to cultural exchange and much needed dialogue between the US citizens and those in El Salvador. Considering the history of US imperialism in Latin America, and its policies that keep El Salvador dependent on export to the US, honest, open dialogue should be the priority. In addition, exchange students and study abroad programs could be initiated with sufficient faculty and student support.

We, (a small group of us and those of Seattle chapter) would like to see CISPES reinstalled on campus. As a solidarity organization, we aim to ensure that such a movement responds to the needs of the Salvadoran people in a timely and effective manner. Our national strength lies in being a volunteer, grassroots organization with strong local chapters, carrying out nationally coordinated local programs. We work closely with Salvadorans themselves; to understand the needs, get their assessment of the movement and help set priorities for our direct support work. The comforts that many North Americans enjoy, is directly derived from this system of inequality created south of the border.

Campaigns:

Our latest campaign success has been the targeting of The Gap and Eddie Bauer (headquarters in Renton) for supporting sweatshops in the labor intensive free-trade zones, a.k.a. maquiladoras. The Gap has agreed to many of the workers demands, Bauer has threatened to pull out of El Salvador completely. Another target is US AID (US Agency for International Development) which is doing nothing to ensure that workers' rights are enforced in Free Trade Zones. AID is involved in the privatization process in El Salvador which is destroying progressive unions and transferring public assets into already wealthy hands. We will change this. We will be working along with UNITE, the (US National Textile Union) as they launch a nationwide campaign against sweatshops here in the US.

Campaign Goals:

- Resist the globalization of the economy and the Contract on the Americas through support of alternatives.
- Expose the attack on immigrants rights as the right-wing effort to distract attention away from profit-motivated policies.
- Win a commitment from the UN and the US to continue to monitor the implementation of the Peace Accords and defend the rights of working people in El Salvador to organize.
- Target US sweatshops in coordination with UNITE.

For those interested in the implementation of the Olympia Chapter, please call 866-6000 ext 6513, or 943-3279, or come our weekly meetings every Tuesday, 5:00 pm in Lib 2204. Also, watch for CISPES sponsored short films on campus. ◆

From the CopWatch Handbook

WATCHING THE POLICE

A. Police Stop someone:

1. Write down officer name, badge number, and car license number if the car is near (do not leave the person being hassled).
2. Write down the time, place, and date of incident.
3. Determine if the person is being arrested and on what charge.
4. Get the names of witnesses to the arrest/harassment and how to contact them.
5. Try to get the name of the arrestee, but do not ask their name unless they have already given it to the police.
6. Whenever possible video tape or take pictures of the incident.
7. After the incident take the time to write out what happened completely and call CopWatch at 352-6543.

B. Police Violence

1. Follow the same steps as above.
2. Attempt to gather witnesses to the incident by explaining to the bystanders what is happening.
3. Encourage the police to be calm and nonviolent.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Attempt to maintain a "reasonable distance" so that you do not get arrested for interfering in the arrest. Explain to the cop that you do not want to interfere but that you know that you have the right to observe their actions.

While there is at least one US Supreme Court decision upholding the right of citizens to observe and even "verbally intervene" when officers are on duty (or in the process of making an arrest), be aware that this does not mean a police officer necessarily is going to respect that right. You still are at risk of police harassment, an order by police to "move along", or may even face arrest.

Under vaguely worded provisions, which relates to obstruction of a police officer, failure to disperse, and hindering law enforcement, an officer may order you to step back while an arrest is being made, he/she may order you to cross the street, or even to get out of the area. It simply is not made clear, under these laws, just how far the police can go in stretching their authority. As unconstitutional as this may be, it means that an officer may threaten to or use these laws to go after you.

Be careful and use your own best judgement as to what you believe constitutes a safe distance from which to observe. As dictated by each individual situation, be careful, nonviolent, make a judgement based on an individual police officer's attitude toward your presence, and always move back or out the area if a partner wishes to retreat. We encourage you to remain as a twosome, and to avoid situations where both of you risk arrest. CopWatch does not encourage verbal intervention or physical intervention.

CopWatch meets every Friday night in the Liberation Cafe at 7pm. Come and be a part. We need volunteers for walking, office, PR, official liasons, etc. You can contact CopWatch at 352-6543 or by mail at PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507.

Illegal to be Poor in Olympia

Pat Tassoni

In cities around the country from Seattle to New York, from San Francisco to Atlanta, the homeless have been attacked through legislation designed to criminalize and chase the poor away. Such a tactic is modeled in part on the innovation of San Francisco's Matrix program, where thousands upon thousands of arrests have been made. Olympia is developing its own agenda in a similar vein by considering anti-homeless and anti-youth ordinances.

The City of Olympia's General Government Committee has looked at and/or enacted a Sidewalk Ordinance, a Fortified Wine Ordinance, an Alley Closure Ordinance, expanding the Skateboarding Ordinance to banning the activity in the downtown, a Youth Dance Ordinance, an Aggressive Panhandling Ordinance, a Cruising Ordinance, and a No Car Camping Ordinance. The direction in which they are moving is indicated in their minutes:

> Downtown Issues - Community Oriented Policing & the Sidewalk Ordinance
>
> Staff from the Police Department Walking Patrol Unit gave a presentation...[on] critical issues facing the patrol and some recommendation on how to deal with these problems.
>
> These critical issues related mostly to the transient population downtown which currently ranges from 10-30 individuals. This transient population is predominately made up of individuals from out of town as Olympia has a reputation for being a safe place for transients. They do not have jobs (however some do receive social security, welfare or disability pay), are not enrolled in a shelter facility, and receive at least one meal a day from the Bread and Roses soup kitchen. Most are involved with misdemeanor crimes such as theft, shoplifting, drinking, nuisance/disturbance, urinating and sleeping in doorways liquor and narcotics charges.
>
> Other populations with the Walking Patrol is faced with in the downtown include "homeless" who have a job and are staying in a shelter such as the Salvation Army and "Refused to go Home Kids" who have a home but choose to hang out downtown. These populations create other problems which the patrol must deal with including panhandling, obstructing sidewalks, skateboarding and cruising.
>
> March 22, 1995

It seems the ones setting the agenda are the police; nowhere are the homeless or youth represented. The solution is to give themselves, the police, more discretionary power. Also involved in the conversation of a No Sitting on the Sidewalk Ordinance is the Olympia Downtown Association. The first city to draft No Sitting on the Sidewalk legislation was Berkeley, CA, where half the members of the committee were members of the Downtown Berkeley Association.

Such ordinances discriminate against the poor, the homeless, youth, people of color, and those who merely look different. They threaten our civil liberties and offer no real solutions to problems of crime and poverty in our community. They are designed to remove undesirables from the downtown shopping area in the name of progress and "economic revitalization." Poverty and homelessness are problems which deserve permanent solutions, not laws which simply remove the victims from public view.

Olympia does not currently have a No Sitting on the Sidewalk Ordinance...yet. Discussion of an Olympian ordinance is scheduled for the end of June. The General Government Committee was waiting for the Seattle Ordinance Appeal Decision. A couple of months ago the Federal 9th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the ordinance, making it illegal to sit on a sidewalk in Seattle commercial zones. It is going to be appealed further. A similar law was overturned in Santa Cruz, CA last year. ◆

(Excessive Force, continued)

are no detox centers in Olympia, the only way to get to one is to be arrested and escorted by the police to Tacoma. He asked someone to call the police on him, and when they did they were told that the police couldn't respond since he wasn't doing anything illegal. So he walked around for a while harassing people, singing and yelling loudly, trying to create enough of a disturbance so that the police would respond. When cops finally did come, they wouldn't take him - god forbid the police actually *help* a homeless person! "Serve and protect" my ass.

We guess it's pretty obvious whose interests the police are protecting. And when we went and spoke to the city council, it was obvious that they're scared that people are making a fuss about it. The mayor, Bob Jacobs, twisted our words, connected us with CopWatch when we hadn't even mentioned them, and said some things that were just *blatant* bullshit ("Well, I have heard from some people that members of CopWatch have been known to actually go around *inciting* people to act out so that the police will have to respond...").

And after all that, we were set up - after we spoke, this nice middle-class churchgoing woman got up to share a touching story about how well the Olympia police department (although she kept saying "the Houston police department" and only corrected herself once) had responded when her son ran away. Coincidentally, one of the officers she mentioned over and over by name - Ian Canaan - was one of the officers involved in the macing incident. She also was escorted to the meeting by two Olympia Police officers, Gabor and Rainer. And although her story was totally confusing, she wasn't asked one question by Bob Jacobs.

Well maybe we should be flattered that they're so freaked out about us that they bothered to set us up. We have no expectations that the city's gonna change police procedure just cuz a few people make a fuss over one incident. But if the police force knows that the community is watching, they know that they can't get away with as much. ◆

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

AIDS March • Saturday, June 1

8:30am Registration at the Capitol Steps, 10am Walk begins
12:30 Refreshments & Awards in Sylvester Park
Call United Communities AIDS Network at 352-2375

Car Sharing: Can It Happen Here?

Tuesday, June 4 • 7-9pm • Four Seasons Bookstore • 7th & Franklin, Olympia

Imagine that you don't own a car. Instead, you share one with others in your neighborhood who belong to a car-sharing co-op. Or perhaps you belong to an organization whose members share a fleet of multiple-use vehicles kept in the garage near where you work. Not as far-fetched as it might sound. At present, over 10,000 people belong to a variety of car-sharing organizations throughout Europe, a growing number in Canada, and at least one ready to be launched in Oregon.

Sponsored by the Olympia Car Share and Voluntary Simplicity. Call 754-7842 for info.

Classical Chinese Theatre Unites with "King Lear"

June 5,6,7, and 8 at 8pm • Experimental Theatre • TESC Comm Building

This free performance open to the public is a unique interpretation of Shakespeare's play based on an innovative combination of music, dance, and theatre, and a union of traditional Western drama, contemporary staging techniques and classical Chinese theatre. Presented by the "Stage, Staging, Stages" program. For more information call 866-6000 x6833.

International March on the Border for Justice for Leonard Peltier and the First Nations

International Rally at Peace Arch Park
Saturday, June 8th • U.S. side: March begins 12 noon • 1 pm
Blaine Park, Blaine, WA (corner of Blaine & Alder)
Call 943-3274 for info.

Support Tacoma Journalist Sandy Nelson

Come to the State Supreme Court to defend free speech for reporters
Tuesday, June 11, 9am at Temple of Justice, Capital Campus, Olympia

In 1990, The News Tribune of Tacoma banished award-winning reporter Sandy Nelson to a non-writing job because of her off-duty activism on an initiative to extend job and housing rights to sexual minorities. Nelson was told she would be reassigned to reporting only if she agreed to refrain from all political activism. The American Civil Liberties Union is suing the newspaper on Nelson's behalf, charging it with political discrimination that violates the state constitution and the Fair Campaign Practices Act.

On June 11, Nelson will ask the State Supreme Court to overturn rulings by Pierce County Superior Court Judge Vicki Hogan, who last year threw out Nelson's constitutional claims and said TNT had a right to discriminate for the sake of its "appearance of objectivity." Nelson's lawyers - and the scores of organizations that have joined two friend-of-the-court briefs on her behalf - hope to persuade justices to affirm the inalienable rights to free speech intended by the authors of the state constitution. Such as ruling would protect the political rights of all private-sector workers - including those who work in the media.

For carpool information (Seattle, Tacoma, Portland) or other information call the Sandy Nelson Defense Committee (206) 756-9971.

Thurston County Draft Ralph Nader for President Contingent

Potluck & Discussion • Saturday, June 21st 6:30 - 9pm at Liberation Cafe

We will get to know each other and work out carpool and other arrangements to go to Seattle to the Washington Draft Nader Convention on Sunday June 29th.

For local information call Nick at 943-7953. The Washington Draft Ralph Nader for President Campaign can be reached at: (206) 789-8730 • 1916 Pike Place #12, Box 382 Seattle, WA 98101

Radical Politics Discussion Group

'68 Democratic Convention and its relevancy to this summer when for the first time since 1968 the Democratic Convention will be held in Chicago with 68s Mayor's son as the current Mayor.

June 23rd, 4 - 6pm at Liberation Cafe. Call 753-7538 for information.

What is Eco-Building?

A forum on straw-bale construction, alternative materials, and what it means to be an Eco-Builder

Monday, June 24, 7pm - 9pm
Washington State General Administration Building, first floor auditorium
Free to the public, small donation suggested

A panel of building and design experts will discuss some of the current state of the art technology in alternative techniques and materials. Particular attention will be given to answering the question, "What does it mean to build sustainably?" Straw-bale construction, recycled-content building materials, and code-related issues are among the specific topics to be addressed by panelists. Sponsored by the Energy Outreach Center and co-sponsored by the NW EcoBuilding Guild. For more information call 943-4595.

ONGOING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Liberation Café

Olympia Political Cultural Center
Every Wednesday 7pm
116 4th Ave E
Top floor of Bulldog News
For more info call 493-6601

Support for Women's Clinic and Choice

Thursdays 8:30 am - 3 pm
1100 Eastside Street NE

Olympia FOR Monthly Speaker Series

Third Sunday of Month
County Courthouse, Blg 1
Call 491-9093 for info.

Hands Off Washington

General Meeting
Last Tuesday of Month
United Churches • Capital & 11th
Call 786-6608 for info

KAOS Radio Supports Olympia Pride Week With Special Day of Programming

In support of the 1996 pride week organized by Capital City Pride, KAOS Olympia Community Radio, is dedicating Sunday, June 16, 1996 as "Queer KAOS" day. During that day, all programming will focus on issues of interest to Gays, Lesbians, Bi's, Trans, and supportive friends.

Programs are being developed that support the theme of local pride week: "Celebrating Our Families with Love, Unity and Pride."

A Program Schedule has been developed (subject to change):

6:00 - 9:30 a.m. Queer Men Singer/Songwriters
HOSTED BY: Tom Freeman and Curt Pavola

9:30 - 10 a.m. THIS WAY OUT (International Lesbian/Gay Radio Magazine)
HOSTED BY Greg Gordon and Lucia Chappelle

10 a.m. - 1 p.m. SISTER SOUND (music by and about women for everyone)

1 - 2 p.m. PRIDEFEST '96 (special from WHYY in Philadelphia)
This special addresses what the future holds for the gay community. Participants include Elizabeth Birch, executive director of theHuman Rights Campaign; Congressman Barney Frank; Melinda Paras, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force; and Rich Tafel, executive director of Log Cabin Republicans.

2 - 3 p.m. US Supreme Court Decision on Amendment 2:
Where do the Courts go From Here?
Olympia Prosecutor Reiko Callner (and another attorney) discuss the decision striking down Anti-Gay Colorado Amendment 2 by the U.S. Supreme Court. Examining the reasoning used by the high court, Callner and her co-panelist will give their analysis on where th courts are headed from here.

3 - 4 p.m. Marriage: Civil Rights Priority or Political Red Herring?
Community Lesbian Activist Anna Schlecht will provide details on the right wing's mobilizing against legal civil marriages for Gays and Lesbians. Will also include a panelist from The Legal Marriage Alliance, supporting civil marriage rights for Gays and Lesbians.

4 - 5 p.m. Religious Faith Within Queer Communities -
a panel discussion of finding reconciliation with churches and synagogues over acceptance of Gay people.

5 - 6 p.m. Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays - Project Open Mind
Campaign. Rev. Paul Beeman of PFlag will discuss issues of family, love and support as it relates to his experience as a father to a Gay son and Lesbian daughter. Other focus will examine custody and child raising issues dor Gay and Lesbian parents.

6 - 7 p.m. AIDS and HIV in Thurston County
Where Do We Stand? A thought provoking look at the transmission of AIDS/HIV in our community, what people need to know to protect themselves and those they love, resources in the community, and where we as a community are heading. A medical professional will be on hand.

7 - 8 p.m. Queers of Color hosted by Gary Galbreath, a member of the Pomo Nation and host of View From the Shore.

8 - 9 p.m. Being a Queer Youth in America.

9 - 10 p.m. Building Unity in the Queer Community.

10 - 11 p.m. Evergreen Queer Alliance. Q

11 p.m. - 1 a.m. QUEER PUNK, hosted by Diana Arens.

PFLAG OLYMPIA'S TV SERIES, "ALL OUT!"

Olympia PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) will launch "ALL OUT! Olympia" June 14, a weekly series of television programs to show the real lives and values of lesbian and gay persons and their families. It will run twice weekly on TCTV, community access cable Channel 3. The series will coincide with National PFLAG's Project Open Mind campaign, which will open June 13 in Western Washington. The project will feature prime-time TV ads on Seattle commercial stations and in these programs on Olympia's Channel 3. The ads show how vicious, hateful words, especially from a few religious leaders, are creating a climate for violence in which many are being attacked, injured, and are even losing their lives.

Each program in the "ALL OUT! OLYMPIA" series provides information helpful for individuals, family members and friends of gay persons, and for class discussions. The programs will suggest ways we can all learn to be supportive in making our homes, schools, churches, workplaces and streets, safe for the gay persons we care about. Acquisition of the programs was funded by a grant from The Pride Foundation, Seattle.

For further information: PFLAG Olympia P.O. Box 6123 Olympia, WA 98502 or the PFLAG Olympia Helpline, (360) 866-0511.

5:00 PM Friday June 14 and 10:30 AM Sunday June 16:

"QUEER SON" Produced by a New Jersey mother of a gay son, this is a series of deeply personal interviews with the mothers and fathers of gay young people — white, black, Asian, Hispanic — revealing their discovery, fear and guilt, religious uncertainty, and ultimate acceptance of their gay children with unconditional love.

5:00 PM Friday June 21 and 10:30 AM Sunday June 23:

"ALWAYS MY KID" An excellent first step in getting the facts families need in overcoming concerns about gay and lesbian persons, and building stronger family relationships. It was produced by the Houston, Texas, PFLAG, with parents' personal stories.

5:00 PM Friday, June 28 and 10:30 AM Sunday, June 30:

"STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART" Producer Dee Mosbacher grew up the lesbian daughter of a Republican member of President Bush's Cabinet. She offers rare insights into the stories of the parents of gay and lesbian children, and their journeys to new understanding. The video is so popular it was given to every member of Congress.

4 Along The Color Line

6 From The Inside Out

8 Corporate Barons/TEAM Act

10 Revoking Corporate Charters

12 Minimum Wage Ruckus

13 CISPES Chapter for Olympia

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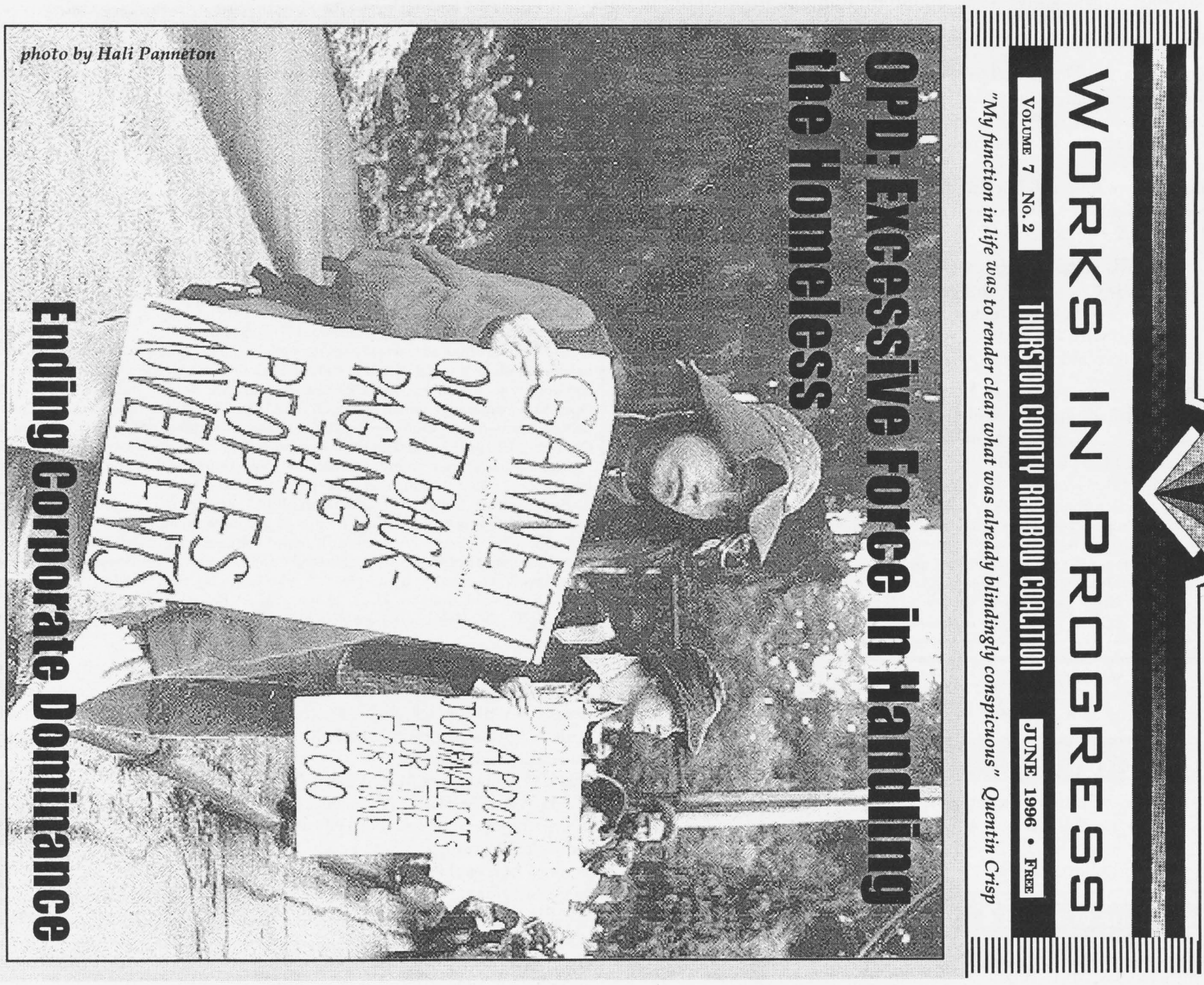
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OPD: Excessive Force in Handling the Homeless
Ending Corporate Dominance
WORKS IN PROGRESS
Volume 7 No. 2
Thurston County Rainbow Coalition
JUNE 1996 • Free
"My function in life was to render clear what was already blindingly conspicuous" Quentin Crisp